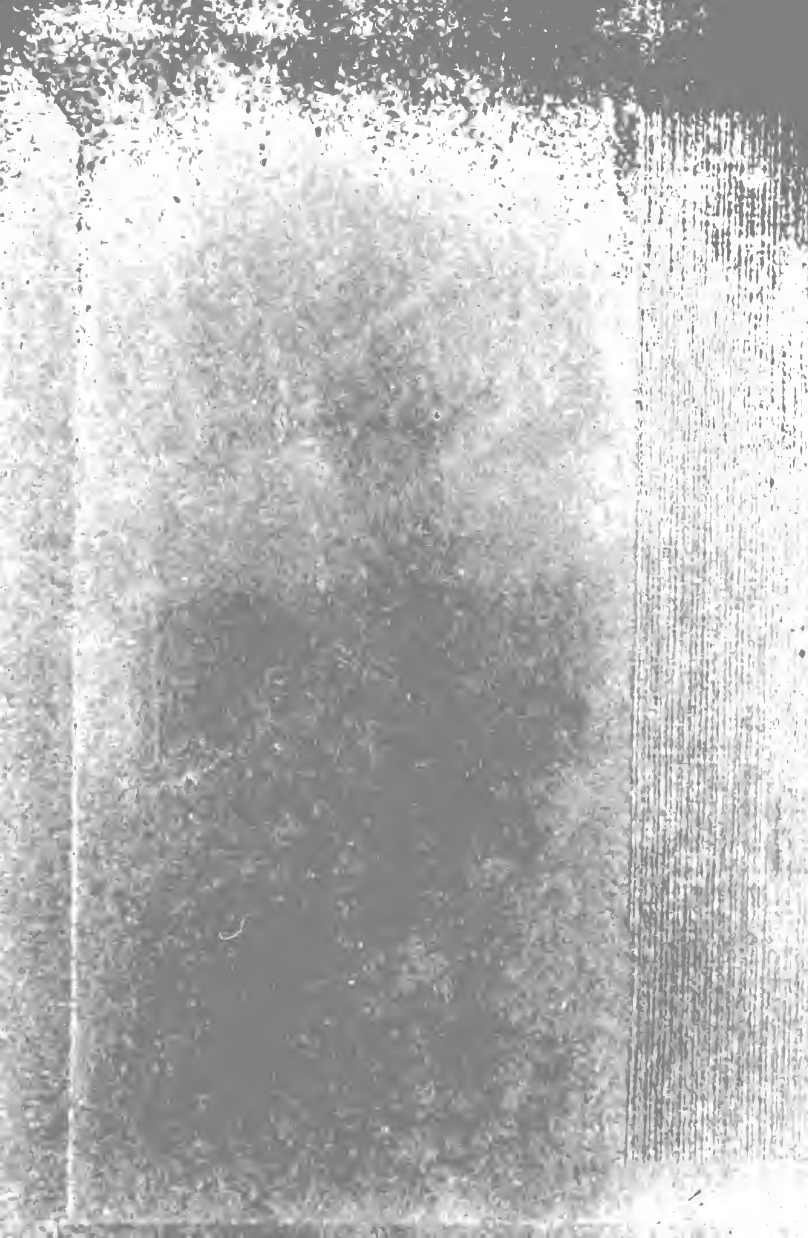




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# "Great Writers."

EDITED BY

PROFESSOR ERIC S. ROBERTSON, M.A.

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*LIFE OF HAWTHORNE.*



LIFE

OF

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

BY

MONCURE D. CONWAY

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## PREFACE.



THERE are few authors with whom the world is more intimate than the one supposed to have most shunned its intimacy. But Nathaniel Hawthorne, though his peculiar sensibility shrank from men, loved mankind, and described his earliest writings as "attempts to open an intercourse with the world." In his works he has occasionally taken the world into his confidence in matters which most men of the world would veil—as in the opening chapter of "The Scarlet Letter." Like his own Hilda, in "Transformation," he was spiritually compelled to descend from his aërial hermitage, and unburden his heart in the world's confessional. And as, when Hilda had disappeared, a duplicate key admitted lover and contadina alike to her virginal chamber, Hawthorne's journals and letters have made a saloon of his retreat, and brought a flare of daylight into the twilight seclusion, where he sat at his beautiful task and fed his sacred lamp. But this prosaic light becomes tender and mystical as it reveals the infusion of his heart's blood in the pigments so refined into finished

pictures. And it is a large compensation for the fewness of these that the walls of his hermitage, as opened by his "American Note Books," are found hung with many sketches, studies, fancies, visions, each with its charm, and all disclosing something of the secret of his art. Still, the pathos of Hawthorne's life is deepened by these revelations. For these multitudinous unmaturing blossoms, with their richness as of flowers blooming on battle-fields, tell a tale of life-blood wasted, the more tragical beside the fruits reporting victories won. Such victories!

Hawthorne has had exceptionally competent biographers and editors of his papers. No one could have edited his "Note Books" with such full information as his widow, though delicacy may have required suppression of some passages relating to herself. Her sister, Elizabeth Peabody, is a cyclopædia of reminiscences: I remember hearing Emerson say that her journals and correspondence would probably be a complete literary and philosophical history of New England during her long life. She was a playmate of Hawthorne in his childhood, and his intimate friend through life. Her recollections have assisted Hawthorne's son, Julian, and George Parsons Lathrop (who married Hawthorne's daughter Rose), both of whom were peculiarly fitted, by personal knowledge and affection, as well as by literary ability, to portray the man and the author. Mr. Lathrop's "Study of Hawthorne" shows us much of the relation between the private life of Hawthorne and his works. Julian Hawthorne's "Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife" reveals the romance of his father's career,

which is illustrated with interesting reminiscences and anecdotes. Had Julian's remarkable story been before him, Henry James, jun., could hardly have introduced his "Hawthorne" with the statement that his "career was probably as tranquil and uneventful a one as ever fell to the lot of a man of letters." Imperfections in the record supplied him have not, however, prevented the younger novelist (Henry James) from giving us a striking and suggestive monograph on his great forerunner. With these, and Field's "Yesterdays," the admirable "Analytical Index" of Hawthorne's works (Houghton), and Page's "Memoir" (London, 1872), it might appear that the life of Hawthorne has been sufficiently treated. But the above-named publications have not exhausted the subject; in some respects they have excited an unsatisfied interest. A series of letters by Hawthorne, owned by Dr. John S. H. Fogg, of Boston, which appeared in the *Athenæum* (London, August 10 and 17, 1889), have brought out an important episode in the author's history. In preparing this work I found much valuable material that has never appeared. Of this, by the bounty of its several owners, I have availed myself, so far as it is due or useful to the public.<sup>1</sup> It is

<sup>1</sup> My chief debt is to Mr. G. M. Williamson (Brooklyn, N. Y.), a Hawthorne enthusiast; my grateful acknowledgments are due also to Messrs. Ferdinand J. Dreer and Simon Gratz, of Philadelphia; to Mr. Walter R. Benjamin, of New York. Nor can I forbear expressing thanks for the information I have received from Miss Elizabeth Peabody, Dr. Loring, Mrs. Hiram Powers, and her son, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Story, Mr. Garnett of the British Museum, and Mr. Wentworth Higginson of Cambridge, Mass. It need hardly be said that for the main facts of Hawthorne's life I largely depend on his son Julian's biography, and G. P. Lathrop's "Study."

possible that some of this new matter has been purposely omitted by Hawthorne's biographers from motives akin to those which led Mrs. Hawthorne to omit passages in the "Note Books" relating to herself. There are aspects of this author's career which, however honourable to himself, are not so honourable to his time and country, and which a member of his household might naturally be too proud to set forth in relief. At any rate the last word concerning Hawthorne has not been said; and though the present writer cannot hope to say that word, he is not hopeless of contributing something that may enhance the interest in Hawthorne's career, and suggest its larger significance.



# LIFE OF HAWTHORNE.

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## CHAPTER I.

IT has been said that every particle of the soil of New England may be traced to the rock from which it was pulverised. The intellectual soil may be certainly traced to the flinty Puritanism which preceded it. The combination of religious and secular elements in the Puritan rock made a substance too hard to be symbolised even by the granite, which was sooner made levigable. In the early New England commonwealth all laws were consecrated, some of the worst being taken seriously after they had become obsolete in England. The first protest against English interference with the internal affairs of New England, was not in the interest of civil liberty, but the reverse. The theocracy had already too much independence, and had not Charles II. interfered, Quakers and "Witches" might have suffered many a year longer.

Hawthorne had not, like the majority of New England authors, a clerical ancestry; his American forefathers

were active in public and political affairs. The founder of the family in America, William Hathorne (so spelt, but pronounced nearly as afterwards written) emigrated from Wiltshire in 1630. (Arms: Azure, a lion's head erased, between three fleurs-de-lis.) William was long a deputy in his Colonial Assembly, for some time its Speaker; he turned soldier when Indians were to be fought; he was a magistrate, and, though he caused Quakers to be scourged, is to be credited with the execution of John Flint for killing a red man. It was this William Hathorne to whom is credited the protest against English interference already referred to. The document (1666) printed by Julian Hawthorne (i. 13) would have been creditable to its writer's valour had he not signed a feigned name, and it sounds a note of independence; but the objects for which irresponsibility to royal commissioners in England is demanded are suspicious. They dread any interference with the government they have built up chiefly because, if the wall be pulled down, "the wild boar will soon destroy the Lord's vineyard," there being "many sectaries and profane persons" longing for such opportunity. The liberty to deal with Friends, and other innocent victims, as wild boars in the Lord's vineyard was, unfortunately for William Hathorne's descendants, for a time continued. William's magisterial successor was his son John. Of this Judge Hathorne's seventy-seven years no good action has been able to survive under the deep shadow of his fanatical fame. The Judge, who died in 1717, probably did not live late enough to realize that where he saw devils in disguise, posterity would see innocent

human beings. He evidently did not consider humanity as involved in witch cases, though there is no indication of his reception of evidence inadequate for a magistrate administering, as contemporary law, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Of one accused woman brought before him, the husband wrote: "She was forced to stand with her arms stretched out. I requested that I might hold one of her hands, but it was declined me; then she desired me to wipe the tears from her eyes, which I did; then she desired that she might lean herself on me, saying she should faint. Justice Hawthorne replied she had strength enough to torture these persons, and she should have strength enough to stand. I repeating something against their cruel proceedings, they commanded me to be silent, or else I should be turned out of the room." There are other ugly records of such trials, but it is probably to this one that the traditional "curse" is traceable—the husband having exclaimed that God would avenge his wife's sufferings.

Of his first American ancestor, William—also notorious for his remorselessness towards some women, "Anne Coleman and her four friends," albeit before his magistracy he had opposed persecution of Quakers—Hawthorne paints an impressive portrait. Of both earlier ancestors he writes:

"I, the present writer, as their representative, hereby take shame upon myself for their sakes, and pray that any curse incurred by them—as I have heard, and as the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year back, would argue to exist—may be now and henceforth removed."

It is satisfactory to find now, in the sixth generation of American Hawthornes, a representative of the family who can smile at the traditional doom ; but it needs no superstition to recognize how such curses, born of fearful facts, tend to fulfil themselves. Hawthorne's language just quoted, from his introduction to "The Scarlet Letter," suggests that in his calamitous winter of 1849 he may have given some credit to the superstition. A family legend, however, demands a certain loyalty in its heirs—especially if præternatural: only distinguished houses are marked out for even retributive attentions from supernal powers. The legendary curse on the Hathornes, and the mysterious disappearance of the titles of Hawthorne's maternal relatives to the land on which the town of Raymond, Maine, now stands, are combined and built into a romantic family monument in "The House of the Seven Gables."

The third son of Judge John Hathorne, "Farmer Joseph," lived and died peacefully at Salem; his, Joseph's, fifth son, "Bold Daniel," became a privateersman in the War of Independence; and in the beginning of that war, 1775, was born Daniel's third son, Nathaniel, the father of our author.

Hawthorne's father was a sea-captain; he was a silent, reserved, stern, melancholy man; he carried books to sea; he was fond of children. He died of yellow fever at Surinam, 1808. His widow—Elizabeth Clarke Manning, descendant of Richard Manning, of Dartmouth, England—was left with two daughters and one son.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author, was born at Salem,

Massachusetts, on the twenty-eighth anniversary of American independence—July 4, 1804. He could thus have no recollection of his father, whose silence, vein of melancholy, love of reading, and personal appearance, he inherited. When Hawthorne was Surveyor of Customs at Salem a sailor stopped him to ask if he were not a relative of Captain Hathorne, whom this sailor had known forty years before. The only external heritage which young Hawthorne received at his father's death was a darkened home. His mother, beautiful, ascetic, in the human rather than the religious way, took the veil of widowhood, and it was never laid aside. Her children played with their mates at school and out of doors, but they saw no society at home. In a little tale, "The Wives of the Dead," Hawthorne describes the sorrow of a young wife whose husband had died in a distant region: "Her face was turned partly inward to the pillow, and had been hidden there to weep; but a look of motionless contentment was now visible upon it, as if her heart, like a deep lake, had grown calm because its dead had sunk down so far within it." Hawthorne always preserved the greatest tenderness for his mother, and her morbid anxieties were an effectual restraint upon his adventurous spirit.

9 In 1871 and 1873 there appeared in the Portland (Maine) *Transcript* what purported to be extracts from a journal kept by Hawthorne from his twelfth year. Although discredited by Julian Hawthorne, I incline to agree with Mr. Lathrop's critical argument in favour of their genuineness. They are not, indeed, of great biographical value, but they show early thoughtfulness,

and some precocity in writing, as well as in observation. One extract will suffice to indicate these, as well as what has been said concerning his relation to his mother :

“A young man named Henry Jackson, jun., was drowned two days ago, up Crooked River. He and one of his friends were trying which could swim the faster. Jackson was behind but gaining; his friend kicked at him in fun, thinking to hit his shoulder and push him back, but missed, and hit his chin, which caused him to take in water and strangle, and before his friend could help or get help, poor Jackson was (Elder Leach says) beyond the reach of mercy. I read one of the Psalms to my mother this morning, and it plainly declares twenty-six times that ‘God’s mercy endureth for ever.’ I never saw Henry Jackson; he was a young man just married. Mother is sad, says that she shall not consent to my swimming any more in the mill-pond with the boys, fearing that in sport my mouth might get kicked open, and then sorrow for a dead son be added to that for a dead father, which she says would break her heart. I love to swim, but I shall not disobey my mother.”

Julian Hawthorne’s biography contains (i. 98) an interesting letter from his aunt Elizabeth Hawthorne, written to Hawthorne’s daughter Una, in the year after his death :

“Your father was born in 1804, on the 4th of July, in the chamber over the little parlour in the house in Union Street, which then belonged to my grandmother Hawthorne, who lived in one part of it. There we lived until 1808, when my father died, at Surinam. I remember that one morning my mother called my brother into her

room, next to the one where we slept, and told him that his father was dead. He left very little property, and my grandfather Manning took us home. All through our childhood we were indulged in all convenient ways, and were under very little control except that of circumstances. There were aunts and uncles, and they were all as fond of your father and as careful of his welfare as if he had been their own child. He was beautiful and bright, and perhaps his training was as good as any other could have been. We were the victims of no educational pedantry. We always had plenty of books, and our minds and sensibilities were not unduly stimulated. . . . Your father was fond of animals, especially kittens. . . . He never wanted money, except to spend; and once, in the country, where there were no shops, he refused to take some that was offered him, because he could not spend it immediately. Another time, old Mr. Forrester offered him a five-dollar bill, which he also refused; which was uncivil, for Mr. Forrester always noticed him very kindly when he met him. At Raymond, in Maine, my grandfather owned a great deal of wild land. Part of the time we were at a farmhouse belonging to the family, as boarders, for there was a tenant on the farm; at other times we stayed at our uncle's. It was close to the great Sebago Lake, now a well-known place. We enjoyed it exceedingly, especially your father and I. At the time our father died, Uncle Manning had assumed the entire charge of my brother's education, sending him to the best schools and colleges. It was much more expensive than it would be to do the same things now, because the public schools were not good then, and of course he never went to them. Your father was lame a long time from an injury received while playing bat-and-ball. His foot pined away and was considerably smaller than the other. He had every doctor that could be heard of; among the rest your grandfather Peabody. But it was 'Dr. Time' who at last cured him. I remember he used to lie upon the floor and read, and that he went upon two crutches. Everybody thought that, if he lived, he would be always lame. Mr. Joseph E. Worcester, the author of the Dictionary, who at one time taught a school in Salem, to which your father went, was very kind to him; he came every evening to hear him repeat his lessons. It was during this long lameness that he acquired his habit of constant reading.

Robert Manning, the uncle who paid for Hawthorne's education, built near Raymond, on Sebago Lake, a dwelling "so ambitious," says Mr. Lathrop, "that it gained the title of 'Manning's Folly.'" It has since been a tabernacle, and is now a mossy ruin, said to be haunted; but it was there, and in that region before it was built, that the happiest years of Hawthorne's boyhood were passed. In October, 1818, the widow Hawthorne finally removed thither from Salem. Hawthorne loved to dwell there again in memory. Mr. James T. Fields, in his "Yesterdays with Authors," reports Hawthorne's talk about those years, near the close of life.

" 'I lived in Maine,' he said, 'like a bird of the air, so perfect was the freedom I enjoyed. But it was there I got my cursed habits of solitude.' During the moonlight nights of winter he would skate until midnight all alone upon Sebago Lake, with the deep shadows of the icy hills on either hand. When he found himself far away from his home and weary with the exertion of skating, he would sometimes take refuge in a log cabin where half a tree would be burning on the broad hearth. He would sit in the ample chimney and look at the stars through the great aperture through which the flames went roaring up. 'Ah,' he said, 'how well I recall the summer days when, with my gun, I roamed at will through the woods of Maine. How sad middle life looks to people of erratic temperaments! Everything is beautiful in youth, for all things are allowed to it then.' "

In 1853, Hawthorne wrote to R. H. Stoddard, who was preparing a sketch of him for *The National Review*, that "one of the peculiarities" of his boyhood was "a



grievous disinclination to go to school." Of the life at Sebago Lake he says :

"Here I ran quite wild, and would, I doubt not, have willingly run wild till this time, fishing all day long, or shooting with an old fowling-piece ; but reading a good deal, too, on the rainy days, especially in Shakespeare and 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' and any poetry or light books within my reach. Those were delightful days ; for that part of the country was wild then, with only scattered clearings, and nine-tenths of it primeval woods. But by and by my good mother began to think it was necessary for her boy to do something else ; so I was sent back to Salem, where a private instructor fitted me for college."

This return to Salem was in the autumn of 1818, and the boy was homesick for Raymond, where the rest of the family remained. Julian Hawthorne publishes (i. 105) the following characteristic letter :

"SALEM, *Tuesday, Sept. 28, 1819.*

"DEAR SISTER;—We are all well, and hope you are the same. I do not know what to do with myself here. I shall never be contented here, I am sure. I now go to a five-dollar school—I, that have been to a ten-dollar one. 'O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou fallen!' I wish I was but in Raymond, and I should be happy. But 'twas light that ne'er shall shine again on life's dull stream.' I have read 'Waverley,' 'The Mysteries of Udolpho,' 'The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom,' 'Roderick Random,' and the first volume of 'The Arabian Nights.'

Oh, earthly pomp is but a dream,  
And like a meteor's short-lived gleam ;  
And all the sons of glory soon  
Will rest beneath the mould'ring stone.

And Genius is a star whose light  
 Is soon to sink in endless night,  
 And heavenly beauty's angel form  
 Will bend like flower in winter's storm.

Though those are my rhymes, yet they are not exactly my thoughts. I am full of scraps of poetry; can't keep it out of my brain. Tell Ebe she's not the only one of the family whose works have appeared in the papers. The knowledge I have of your honor and good sense, Louisa, gives me full confidence that you will not show this letter to anybody. You may to mother, though. My respects to Mr. and Mrs. Howe.

"I remain, your humble servant and affectionate brother,  
 "N. H."

The message to Ebe—his childish appellation of his sister Elizabeth, which adhered to her—suggests that he may have been experimenting with the Salem paper. In the following year he beguiled his loneliness by printing with his pen a weekly *Spectator*, of which Mr. Lathrop gives (p. 101) specimens showing his boyish humour. An advertisement says: "Employment will be given to any number of indigent Poets and Authors at this office." In an essay "On Industry," he says: "It has somewhere been remarked that an author does not write the worse for knowing little or nothing of his subject. We hope the truth of this saying will be manifest in the present article. With the benefits of Industry we are not personally acquainted." The first issue of the *Spectator* is dated August 21, 1820; the last (September 18, 1820) contained these lines:

Days of my youth, ye fleet away,  
 As fades the bright sun's cheering ray,

And scarce my infant hours are gone  
 Ere manhood's troubled step comes on.  
 My infant hours return no more,  
 And all their happiness is o'er :  
 The stormy sea of life appears,  
 A scene of tumult and of tears.

The journalistic pastime was given up on the entrance upon serious work. His uncle William Manning employed Hawthorne as secretary, and, with preparations for college, his hands were full. In October, 1820, he writes to his sister (Lathrop, p. 108) :

"I am very angry with you for not sending me some of your poetry. You will not see one line of mine until you return the confidence which I have placed in you. I have bought the 'Lord of the Isles,' and intend either to send or to bring it to you. I like it as well as any of Scott's other poems. I have read Hogg's 'Tales,' 'Caleb Williams,' 'St. Leon,' and 'Mandeville.' I admire Godwin's novels, and intend to read them all. I shall read 'The Abbot' by the author of 'Waverley,' as soon as I can hire it. I have read all Scott's novels except that. I wish I had not, that I might have the pleasure of reading them again. Next to these I like 'Caleb Williams.' I have almost given up writing poetry. No man can be a Poet and a book-keeper at the same time. I do find this place most 'dismal,' and have taken to chewing tobacco with all my might, which, I think, raises my spirits. Say nothing of it in your letters, nor of the 'Lord of the Isles.' . . . I do not think I shall ever go to college. I can scarcely bear the thought of living upon Uncle Robert for four years longer. How happy I should be to be able to say, 'I am Lord of myself!' You may cut off this part of my letter, and show the other to Uncle Richard. Do write me some letters in skimmed milk. I must conclude, as I am in a 'monstrous hurry!'

In a letter to his mother, March 13, 1821, he writes :

"I don't read so much now as I did, because I am more taken

up in studying. I am quite reconciled to going to college, since I am to spend my vacations with you. Yet four years of the best part of my life is a great deal to throw away. I have not yet concluded what profession I shall have. The being a minister is of course out of the question. I should not think that even you could desire me to choose so dull a way of life. Oh no, mother, I was not born to vegetate forever in one place, and to live and die as tranquil as—a puddle of water. As to lawyers, there are so many of them already that one half of them (upon a moderate calculation) are in a state of actual starvation. A physician, then, seems to be ‘Hobson’s choice;’ but yet I should not like to live by the diseases and infirmities of my fellow-creatures. And it would weigh very hardly on my conscience, in the course of my practice, if I should chance to send any unlucky patient ‘ad inferum,’ which, being interpreted, is ‘to the realms below.’ Oh that I was rich enough to live without any profession! what do you think of my becoming an author, and relying for support upon my pen? Indeed, I think the illegibility of my hand is very author-like. How proud you would be to see my works praised by the reviewers, as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull. But authors are always poor devils, and therefore Satan may take them. I am in the same predicament as the honest gentleman in ‘Espriella’s Letters,’—

“‘I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,  
A-musing in my mind what garment I shall wear.’”

Hawthorne was prepared by a Salem lawyer, Benjamin Oliver, for Bowdoin College (Brunswick, Maine), which he entered in 1821. He had the good fortune to be a Freshman with Longfellow, his friendship with whom continued through life. Another classmate was Jonathan Cilley, afterwards a member of Congress. Franklin Pierce, who became President of the United States, was then a Sophomore in the College. Another college-mate was Horatio Bridge (U.S.N.), to whom, dedicating

“The Snow Image,” Hawthorne says, “If anybody is responsible for my being at this day an author, it is yourself.”

“I was an idle student,” wrote Hawthorne to Stoddard, “negligent of College rules and the Procrustean details of academic life, rather choosing to nurse my own fancies than to dig Greek roots and be numbered among the learned Thebans.” The following ominous letter—for which I am indebted to Mr. G. M. Williamson—points the confession just quoted :

“BOWDOIN COLL., BRUNSWICK, *May 31, 1822.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—As I intend that you shall have no cause of complaint for my neglect this term, I take this early opportunity of writing to you. There is no news here, except that all the Card-Players have been found out. We have all been called before the Government, two have been suspended, and several more, myself among the number, have been fined. The President has written to all the parents of those who were found out, and to my mother among the rest. If Uncle R——, hears of it he will probably take me away from College. I noticed in the paper that No. 16885 had drawn a prize of 1000. Is not that one of your tickets? If it is, I congratulate you upon your good fortune, and only wish it had been 100,000.

“I have been much more steady this term, than I was last, as I have not drank any kind of spirit, nor played cards, for the offence for which I was fined was committed last term. The reason of my good conduct is that I am very much afraid of being suspended if I continue any longer in my old courses.

“I hope you will write to me soon and tell me all about your prize. I must conclude my letter as it is nearly recitation time, and it is probable that you will not be able to read half that I have written,

“I remain, your friend,

“N. H.”

The name of the friend to whom the above letter was written does not appear. In a letter of the previous day, to his mother, he says: "I believe the President intends to write to the friends of all the delinquents. Should that be the case, you must show the letter to nobody. If I am again detected I shall have the honour of being suspended. When the President asked what we played for, I thought it proper to inform him it was fifty cents, although it happened to be a quart of wine; but if I had told him of that, he would probably have fined me for having a 'blow.' There was no untruth in the case, as the wine costs fifty cents. I have not played at all this term. I have not drank any spirits or wine this term, and shall not till the last week."

The College President (William Allen), in his letter to Mrs. Hawthorne, mentions that the offence, for which her son had been fined fifty cents, was not recent, and adds: "Perhaps he might not have gamed, were it not for the influence of a student whom we have dismissed from College." This appears to have been the only thing in the affair that excited any feeling in Hawthorne. "I have a great mind," he writes to his sister, "to commence playing again, merely to show him that I scorn to be seduced by another into anything wrong." In the same letter he says: "Ever since my misfortune I have been as steady as a sign-post, and as sober as a deacon, have been in no 'blows' this term, nor drank any kind of 'wine or strong drink.' So that your comparison of me to the 'prodigious son' will hold good in nothing, except that I shall probably return penniless, for I have had no money this six weeks." It is plain that the faults

of the Hawthorne household were not of the puritanical kind.

Hawthorne paid fines regularly rather than make declamations. He excelled only in Latin and in composition. The best thing Bowdoin College did for him was to give him three or four friends.

## CHAPTER II.

HAWTHORNE graduated in 1825, just after reaching his majority. He returned to Salem, and entombed himself, in the "haunted chamber" of the old family mansion, for the next three years. Of any incident in these hermit years no record remains in his journals, nor has any letter written during that time appeared. In his letter to Stoddard (1853) he refers to this period as follows :

"It was my fortune or misfortune, just as you please, to have some slender means of supporting myself; and so, on leaving College, in 1825, instead of immediately studying a profession, I sat myself down to consider what pursuit in life I was best fit for. My mother had now returned, and taken up her abode in her deceased father's house, a tall, ugly, old, grayish building (it is now the residence of half a dozen Irish families), in which I had a room. And year after year I kept on considering what I was fit for, and time and my destiny decided that I was to be the writer that I am. I had always a natural tendency (it appears to have been on the paternal side) toward seclusion; and this I now indulged to the utmost, so that, for months together, I scarcely held human intercourse outside of my family; seldom going out except at twilight, or only to take the nearest way to the most convenient solitude, which was oftentimes the seashore—the rocks and beaches in that vicinity being as fine as any in New England. Once a year, or



thereabouts, I used to make an excursion of a few weeks, in which I enjoyed as much of life as other people do in the whole year's round. Having spent so much of my boyhood and youth away from my native place, I had very few acquaintances in Salem, and during the nine or ten years that I spent there, in this solitary way, I doubt whether so much as twenty people in the town were aware of my existence. Meanwhile, strange as it may seem, I had lived a very tolerable life, always seemed cheerful, and enjoyed the very best bodily health. I had read endlessly all sorts of good and good-for-nothing books, and, in the dearth of other employment, had early begun to scribble sketches and stories, most of which I burned."

To this may be added the more characteristic retrospect in his "Note Book," under date of October 4, 1840: "Here I sit in my old accustomed chamber, where I used to sit in days gone by. . . . Here I have written many tales,—many that have been burned to ashes, many that doubtless deserved the same fate. This claims to be called a haunted chamber, for thousands upon thousands of visions have appeared to me in it; and some few of them have become visible to the world. If ever I should have a biographer, he ought to make great mention of this chamber in my memoirs, because so much of my lonely youth was wasted here, and here my mind and character were formed; and here I have been glad and hopeful, and here I have been despondent. And here I sat a long, long time, waiting patiently for the world to know me, and sometimes wondering why it did not know me sooner, or whether it would ever know me at all,—at least, till I were in my grave. And sometimes it seemed as if I were already in the grave, with only life enough to be chilled and benumbed. But

oftener I was happy,—at least as happy as I then knew how to be, or was aware of the possibility of being. By and by, the world found me out in my lonely chamber, and called me forth,—not, indeed, with a loud roar of acclamation, but rather with a still, small voice,—and forth I went, but found nothing in the world that I thought preferable to my solitude till now. . . . And now I begin to understand why I was imprisoned so many years in this lonely chamber, and why I could never break through the viewless bolts and bars; for if I had sooner made my escape into the world, I should have grown hard and rough, and been covered with earthly dust, and my heart might have become callous by rude encounters with the multitude. . . . But living in solitude till the fulness of time was come, I still kept the dew of my youth, and the freshness of my heart. . . . I used to think I could imagine all passions, all feelings, and states of the heart and mind; but how little did I know! . . . Indeed we are but shadows; we are not endowed with real life, and all that seems most real about us is but the thinnest substance of a dream, till the heart be touched. That touch creates us,—then we begin to be,—thereby we are beings of reality and inheritors of eternity.”

This creating touch had come for Hawthorne from Miss Sophia Amelia Peabody. Many years ago the sister of this lady, Miss Elizabeth Peabody, always in Hawthorne's confidence, wrote out some particulars of those lonely years, which have not been published. I am indebted to Mr. G. M. Williamson for the use of this valuable manuscript.

“He graduated at Brunswick, Maine, in the year 1825, and immediately returned to Salem, where his mother was living in a house belonging to her brother, William Manning. He was not attracted to either of the professions, but to literary art, and there he began to write his first work, ‘Fanshawe.’ Later in life he repudiated it, and did not allow it to appear again. As all his classmates were Maine men, and his mother lived in the most profound retirement, literally receiving no visitors, the sensitive, shy young man was too entirely alone. After a while, however, having made himself thoroughly acquainted with the ancient history of Salem, and especially with the witchcraft era, he began to write stories, a few of which are to be found among the ‘Twice-told Tales’; but the bulk of them he once burnt up, in a fit of despair. He said some of these were perhaps the most powerful things he had written, but felt they were *morbid*. And he remarked that, when he found, on re-reading anything, that it had not the healthiness of nature, he felt as if he had been guilty of a lie. He was not sure that he had burnt all that deserved that fate. He also told me the following story of his effort to get into print. He wrote a book which he named the ‘Storyteller.’ It began describing himself, the author, as a dreamy person who subjected all his observation and reading to his fancy, reproducing it in the form of a story; and that he was regarded by his neighbours, and even by most of his relatives, as an idler and cumberer of the ground. But he had one neighbour as little of a society man as himself, yet very different; for this young man was an enthusiast in religion who felt

an internal call to convert the whole world. The two odd neighbours drew together because pretty much alike in reputation, viz., as both impracticable and unpractical loafers. So one day, talking over between themselves their anomalous position, they agreed to set forth, the one to preach in the open air wherever he could collect a congregation by means of placards posted on trees and fences of the place where he should preach in the afternoon; and the other advertising that he should in the evening tell a story. They started off and wandered over New England, and the tales, afterwards told again, had this origin. When the book was done, he sent it to Goodrich to publish, but Goodrich declined to undertake it—it was two volumes—but said he was publishing *The Token*, and would buy some of the stories for this, and also the editor of *The New England Magazine* would take some of the stories. So they tore up the book, and Hawthorne said he cared little for the stories afterwards, which had in their original place in the 'Storyteller' a greater degree of significance; and he got little or nothing as pay. Then, as nobody reviews stories in magazines, it did not serve the purpose of introducing him into the world of letters. 'It was like a man talking to himself in a dark place.' Meanwhile his classmates went into politics and became noted men, but did not forget the beautiful young man full of genius at college, whom they called 'Oberon the Fairy,' on account of his beauty, and because he improvised tales. He was offered public place by Van Buren at their instance, but refused everything, being uninterested in present politics, and ignorant; for, as he said, 'I cannot

understand the newspapers, or history till it is at least a hundred years old.'

"But his friend, Horatio Bridge, would not abandon the idea of his finding a high place in the temple of fame—made him a visit to remonstrate with him on not doing something—so Hawthorne told him of his attempt with Goodrich. On this Bridge went to Goodrich and told him to write to Hawthorne as if from his own motion, and ask him to select a volume of tales from those which had been published, and offer the usual royalty, saying to Goodrich that he (Bridge) would pay if the book failed, but he did not want to have Hawthorne know that he had spoken to him. (Mr. Bridge told me this himself.) So Mr. Goodrich did so; and hence the first volume was published in 1837 or 1838. Hawthorne was to have \$100, but Goodrich failed, and he did not get a cent. The book, however, was reviewed by Longfellow, and the world found it had a new original author.

"Then O'Sullivan, of *The Democratic Review*, came to Salem and engaged him at \$5 a page. In 1840 he went to Brook Farm, and left in six months, and then published the 'Grandfather's Chair' in three parts. I was keeping bookstore then and published it. This was a great success; and Tappan and Dutton made him a great offer for it, and also engaged him to write 'True Stories for Children.'

"He was married in 1842, and while living in Concord published a second volume of 'Twice-told Tales'; also two volumes collected partly from *The Democratic Review*, which G. P. Putnam of New York published under the title of 'Mosses from an Old Manse;' and later, 'The

Snow Image and Other Tales.' But that was not until after he had left Concord, which he left when *The Democratic Review* failed, owing him a considerable sum of money. He then went to Salem, and literary work was suspended until he lost his place by the coming in of Taylor as President. He then wrote his first romance, 'The Scarlet Letter,' which Ticknor and Fields published (and in the end they became his sole publishers). Before he went to Europe, as Consul at Liverpool, all his works were published in a uniform edition."

Miss Peabody, as we shall see, was not fully informed on one or two business points (for instance, Hawthorne did not refuse office), but her general impressions are correct. So much of the "Storyteller," alluded to by Miss Peabody, as ever saw the light—or twilight—in *The Token* is now included in the "Mosses from an Old Manse," under the title "Passages from a Relinquished Work." The account in it of the Storyteller's experience with his audience provokes real laughter, and shows that Hawthorne might have made himself a famous humorist. Miss Peabody says little about "Fanshawe," Hawthorne's earliest romance—purposely, no doubt, for the author had done his best to suppress it, and was not pleased to have his friends allude to it. The printing of "Fanshawe" (1828) cost its author a hundred dollars. The profit was in experience. There is no foretaste of Hawthorne's individuality in the book, none of his exquisite and subtle English. The style is without any particular fault, unless it be a monotonous smoothness. It bears witness to its author's unworldli-

ness, in his twenty-fourth year, to his ignorance of supreme passions, and of the motives that impel men to evil. One of his two villains has determined to reform his wicked ways, and, in order to escape from an old comrade in wickedness, helps that comrade to abduct a lovely maiden. The abductor loses his prize and his life by his own gratuitous stupidity. The more attractive of this maiden's two lovers rescues her; then, after she has offered him her hand, with every indication of affection, he passes it over to his rival, without any apparent motive for the sacrifice. The book is thus a curiosity of literature, as a romance; but it contains interesting, if at times prosy, descriptions of Bowdoin College, a good portrait of its venerable president, and some fine sketches of natural scenery in the vicinity of Brunswick. The book was hardly noticed; but the *Critic*—possibly by the pen of Longfellow—said its author would be heard from again, and with honour.

In the early days of New England, every man performed some practical service in the community. The first immigrant Emerson, though of aristocratic family, became a baker at Ipswich, and such instances were not rare. The immemorial custom became transcendent law, and a youth could not decline each and all of the prescribed avocations without some combat. If he were of a meditative and literary turn there was the ministry open to him. There are several passages in Hawthorne's writings indicating that some of his relatives—his maternal uncles we may suppose—were offended by his refusal to undertake any recognized vocation, not even the ministry.

In fact—to make a little digression—Hawthorne, without being of a sceptical temperament, manifested from childhood a singular aversion to churches, and I cannot find that his mother and sisters had much disposition to change him in this respect. He would appear to have derived from his studies of witch-persecution in Salem, some such lesson as that which, in Balzac's "La Succube," Tournebouche, after witnessing the torture and murder of the so-called Sorceress, transmitted to his son—"firstly, that to live happily, it is necessary to keep far away from church people, to honour them much without giving them leave to enter your house." It was, however, their house that Hawthorne disliked to enter. At college he was robust except for what he calls his "Sunday sickness"—a trouble well known in colleges where church-going is compulsory. At a time when the Methodist Father Taylor, of the Seamen's Bethel in Boston, so graphically described by Charles Dickens, was making an impression on best men and women—among others on Emerson—the lady who was to become Hawthorne's wife desired him to hear that preacher. He replies: "Most absolute little Sophia, didst thou expressly command me to go to Father Taylor's church this very sabbath? Now, it would not be an auspicious day for me to hear the aforesaid Son of Thunder. I have a cold, though, indeed, I fear I have partly conjured it up to serve my naughty purpose. Some sunshiny day, when I am wide awake and warm and genial, I will go and throw myself open to his blessed influence; but now there is only one thing I feel anywise inclined to do, and that is to go to sleep. But indeed,



dearest, I feel somewhat afraid to hear this divine Father Taylor, lest my sympathy with your admiration of him be colder and feebler than you look for. Our souls are in happiest unison, but we must not disquiet ourselves if every tone be not re-echoed from one to the other—if every shade be not reflected in the alternate mirror. Our broad and general sympathy is enough to secure our bliss, without our following it into minute details. Will you promise not to be troubled, should I be unable to appreciate the excellence of Father Taylor? Promise me this, and at some auspicious hour, which I trust will soon arrive, Father Taylor shall have an opportunity to make music with my soul. But I forewarn you, dearest, that I am a most unmalleable man; you are not to suppose, because my spirit answers to every touch of yours, that, therefore, every breeze, or even every whirlwind, can upturn me from my depths.”

In no other letter printed by his son can I find further mention of Father Taylor, and indeed Julian Hawthorne says he cannot remember his father's attending church. In his “Sunday at Home” (“Twice-told Tales”) Hawthorne says: “It is my misfortune seldom to fructify, in a regular way, by any but printed sermons. The first strong idea which the preacher utters, gives birth to a train of thought, and leads me onward, step by step, quite out of hearing of the good man's voice, unless he be indeed a son of thunder.” His experience of parsons in Salem could not have been fortunate to judge by his portrait of Thumpcushion: “Such sounding and expounding the moment he began to grow warm, such slapping with his open palm, thumping with his closed

fist, and banging with the whole weight of the great Bible, convinced me that he held, in imagination, either the old Nick or some Unitarian infidel at bay, and belaboured his unhappy cushion as proxy for those abominable adversaries" (Page's "Memoir," p. 162).

In making this parson his guardian, the "Storyteller" reveals the secret of Hawthorne's own *Wanderjähre*. The parson is figurehead of the whole Salem régime. "I was a youth of gay and happy temperament, with an incorrigible levity of spirit, of no vicious propensities, sensible enough, but wayward and fanciful. What a character was this to be brought into contact with the old pilgrim spirit of my guardian! We were at variance on a thousand points; but our chief and final dispute arose from the pertinacity with which he insisted on my adopting a particular profession: while I, being heir to a moderate competence, had avowed my purpose of keeping aloof from the regular business of life. This would have been a dangerous resolution anywhere in the world; it was fatal in New England. There is a grossness in the conceptions of my countrymen; they will not be convinced that any good thing may consist with what they call idleness; they can anticipate nothing but evil of a young man who neither studies physic, law, nor gospel, nor opens a store, nor takes to farming, but manifests an incomprehensible disposition to be satisfied with what his father left him. The principle is excellent in its general influence, but most miserable in its effect on the few who violate it. I had a quick sensitiveness to public opinion, and felt as if it ranked me with the tavern haunters and town-paupers—with the drunken

poet who hawked his own Fourth of July Odes, and the broken soldier who had been good for nothing since last war. The consequence of all this was a piece of light-hearted desperation. I do not over-estimate my notoriety when I take it for granted that many of my readers must have heard of me in the wild way of life which I adopted. The idea of becoming a wandering storyteller had been suggested a year or two before, by an encounter with several merry vagabonds in a showman's wagon, where they and I had sheltered ourselves during a summer shower."

Hawthorne had inserted a *w* in the family name during the last year of his college life,—whether from poetic sentiment, or (as I suspect) from a dislike of the ancestral record, combined with a desire for secrecy, does not appear,—and it proved to be a disguise. Some neighbours—the Peabodys, for instance—did not know that the early pieces so signed were by Mrs. Hawthorne's son. Perhaps, too, they could not imagine the handsome, robust youth writing in such a meditative and delicate vein. One of his earliest pieces, printed in Goodrich's *Token* (1832), attracted Margaret Fuller's attention; but she supposed it by a feminine hand, and made inquiries after the new authoress! This adopted *w* led a Frenchman, of whom Hawthorne took lessons, to translate him into M. de l'Aubépine. Hawthorne could hardly have imagined, as his son suggests (i. 8) that his name was really a translation, but he played with the Frenchman's version, used it in "Rappacini's Daughter" ("Mosses from an Old Manse,") and in *The Democratic Review*. Possibly it

was one cause of the interest of French writers in Hawthorne.<sup>1</sup> But this change of name, which Hawthorne's college correspondents but slowly conceded—continuing for some time to address him as "Dear

<sup>1</sup> Some of these stories were "imités" by M. Spoll ("Contes Étranges"), and M. Forgues gave his countrymen "La Lettre Rouge" and "La Maison aux sept Pignons." In the *Revue Bleue* (November 16, 1889), M. Paul Masson began further translations with "La Fiancée du Shaker." In his introduction M. Masson speaks of Hawthorne as "l'illustre humoriste américain," which may be accepted as an offset to M. Émile Montégut's description of our author in 1860, as "Un romancier pessimiste" (*Revue des Deux Mondes*). M. Masson acutely remarks that Hawthorne was a pioneer in the school which has replaced the idea of "art for art's sake." Speaking of "The Shaker Bridal," the translator remarks: "Dans la courte Nouvelle qu'on va lire, il a spécialement en vue de combattre ces dogmes austères qui étouffent en l'homme ses penchants sympathiques, et sacrifient à un faux idéal de détachement terrestre les aspirations les plus légitimes de notre nature." The sketch in question seems, however, coldly impartial between the ideas of celibacy and matrimony, and might readily be cited by M. Montégut in support of his theory of pessimism. In 1856 Hawthorne's "Wonder Book" ("Livre des Merveilles") was translated by M. Léonce Rabillon, a note to whom has been shown me by Mr. W. R. Benjamin:—

" U.S. CONSULATE, LIVERPOOL, *August 22, 1856.*

" SIR,—I sincerely thank you for the courtesy which has induced your reference to me in regard to the publication of your translation of the 'Wonder Book'; and I beg to assure you that I have great pleasure in complying with your request. I send the accompanying certificate of my consent, to yourself, rather than to Mr. Hachette, because your letter leaves me in doubt whether the manuscript of the translation has yet been forwarded to that gentleman.—Believe me, my dear sir, sincerely yours,

"NATHL. HAWTHORNE."

Hachette et Cie published all these translations.

Hath."—is especially interesting as an early symptom of his desire to preserve an *incognito* in his rambles along the coast where the name of the seafaring Hathornes was widely known. He desired to sit in taverns among rough people as an equal, and to gather knowledge of them and their ways in the only way possible to his shy nature. Wherever he went, his shell, however invisible, was found to be with him, by any who came too close.

### CHAPTER III.

SUMMER excursions through the White Mountains, on the Western Lakes, to Niagara, in Central New York, and elsewhere, are traceable in Hawthorne's early tales and sketches: e.g., "The Seven Vagabonds," "The Great Carbuncle," "The Notch of the White Mountains," "The Canterbury Pilgrims," "Chippings with a Chisel." But the world has forever lost the record of some of his more important travels—namely, those amid the legends and folklore of New England. The chief toil of several years was embodied in a set of stories, which he entitled "Seven Tales of my Native Land" (their motto, "We are Seven"), but, after vain efforts to find a publisher, he burnt them: from their ashes arose, "The Devil in Manuscript." It is probable, however, that some of the main incidents of these seven tales were reproduced in "Grandfather's Chair" (1840-1842). This I infer from a note, shown me by Mr. Williamson, from Hawthorne to S. G. Goodrich (dated at Salem, Nov. 9, 1830), offering for *The Token*, a story "by the author of 'Provincial Tales.'" He adds: "An unpublished book is more obscure than many that creep into the world, and your readers will

suppose that the 'Provincial Tales' are among the latter." This story, which has escaped the attention of Hawthorne's biographers and bibliographers, appeared in *The Token* for 1830, under the title of "The Young Provincial." It is about "Grandfather's" gun, his fight at Bunker Hill, imprisonment at Halifax, and escape. Hawthorne at one time meant to call the stories in "Grandfather's Chair" by the title "Provincial Tales." It is also probable that some of the burnt material was resuscitated in "Tales of the Province House;" but his sister's recollection of others proves that they were never rewritten.

Goodrich, the publisher ("Peter Parley"), is said to have been a "sweater" of young writers, but to him belongs the credit of being the first editor to recognize the ability of Hawthorne. True, he did not pay much, and in the end he could not pay all he promised; but, if it be remembered that (being himself an author) he was trying to build up American literature in competition with immense masses of unpaid foreign publications, he should be given credit for having paid as much as thirty-five dollars for each story. Goodrich's annual was entitled, *The Boston Token and Atlantic Souvenir*. In it appeared eighteen pieces by Hawthorne (1830-1838), and they were all paid for. Moreover, Goodrich published several of Hawthorne's stories in each issue of his annual. Four were inserted in *The Token* for 1830, the editor writing to Hawthorne: "As they are anonymous, no objection arises from having so many pages by one author, particularly as they are as good, if not better, than anything else I get. My

estimate of the pieces is sufficiently evinced by the use I have made of them, and I cannot doubt that the public will coincide with me." Hawthorne was also conceded the right to include such stories in any volume he might publish.

However, Hawthorne could not live on one annual, so he made an effort to get a connection with others. Mr. Ferdinand J. Dreer copies for me an application which, though fruitless, possesses interest:

"SALEM (MASS.), *January 27, 1832.*

"GENTLEMEN,—I am the author of some tales ('My Kinsman, Major Molineux'; 'Roger Malvin's Burial'; and the 'Gentle Boy') published in *The Token* for the present year. I do not know whether they attracted your notice; but the object of this letter is to inquire whether you would choose to insert an article from me in the next *Souvenir*? and if so, what number of pages? and whether there is any mode of transmitting the manuscript to Philadelphia, except by mail?

"I should not wish to be mentioned as the author of those tales.—Very respectfully,

"NATH. HAWTHORNE.

"Messrs. Carey and Lea."

Why Hawthorne did not wish to be known as author of the tales is explicable by the fact that Goodrich was able to publish the four, by the same writer, because they were anonymous. Compelled to write for other publications for support—*The Knickerbocker*, *The New England Magazine*, *The American Monthly Magazine*, even *The Salem Gazette*—he avoided offence to any editorial susceptibilities by adopting pseudonyms. One of these "Ashley Allen Royce" is curious, but "Oberon,"



as we have seen, was reminiscence of an appellation given by his college friends—because of his beauty, and his fondness for romance.

In the beginning of 1836 Fortune seemed about to smile on Hawthorne. Through Goodrich he received the editorship of the "Bewick Company's" *American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*, with a salary of five hundred dollars. But the editor had to write the whole of each number, which with his sister's help he did; but, alas, he had been invoked to buttress a sinking concern. The company soon became insolvent, and Hawthorne got but a small part of his money. Hawthorne at first visited this on the head of Goodrich, who, however, appears to have been as seriously involved as himself in the catastrophe. Hawthorne resumed his relations with that publisher, and presently, still assisted by his sister, wrote Peter Parley's "Universal History," for which he received the sum agreed on—one hundred dollars. The work had a large circulation, but whether its compilers got anything more does not appear. Hawthorne's son does not print a sufficient number of Goodrich's letters, which he mentions as "numerous," to justify an adverse verdict on the publisher who brought Hawthorne forward, and published the "Twice-told Tales."

Although in the magazine which he edited, Hawthorne wrote a good deal that was merely perfunctory, his articles were conscientious pieces of work, and indicate a marvellous amount of reading. Every issue had its pearl, as witness the following which I have gathered from Mr. Williamson's files.

Martha's Vineyard, to which the first extract relates, is now the Delectable City of revivalists, to which they throng on "celestial" steam-lines; but it was a little known island when Hawthorne wandered there in youth, and found its most interesting society in the ancient graveyard. Our selection refers to the epitaphs, most of which he did not like.

"Yet one of them was worth reading. It was consecrated to the memory of John and Lydia Claghorn, a young whaler and his wife, the former of whom had perished on the farther side of Cape Horn about the same time that Lydia had died in child-bed. The monumental verse ran thus:—

" ' John and Lydia, that lovely pair ;  
A whale killed him, her body lies here ;  
Their souls, we hope, with Christ shall reign—  
So our great loss is their great gain.' "

John Claghorn has now slept beneath the sea, and Lydia here in her lonesome bed, between sixty and seventy years. One of the rarest things in the world is an appropriate and characteristic epitaph, marked with the truth and simplicity which a sorrowing heart would pour into the effusion of an unlettered mind; an expression, in unaffected language, of what would be the natural feelings of friends and relatives were they standing above the grave. It seems to us that this rude and homely verse may be ranked among the masterpieces of monumental literature. . . . In a spot where there were several children's graves together, almost obliterated by time, a wild rose, red, fragrant

and very small, had either sprouted from one of the little mounds, or been planted there by the forgotten parents of the forgotten child, and had now spread over the whole group of those small graves. 'The mother's dust had long ago mingled with the dust over which she wept—the nameless infant, had it lived, would have been hoary and decrepit now—yet, all this while, though marble would have decayed, the rose had been faithful to its trust. It told of affection still.'

One of Hawthorne's excursions was on an Ontario steamboat, voyaging from Ogdensburgh westward. The region was a comparative wilderness in those days, and the steamboat primitive. Hawthorne's sketch is of especial interest as illustrating his human sympathy and his optimistic faith.

"There were three different orders of passengers: an aristocracy in the grand cabin and ladies' saloon; a commonalty in the forward cabin; and, lastly, a multitude on the forward deck, constituting as veritable a Mob as could be found in any country. These latter did not belong to that proud and independent class among our native citizens who chance, in the present generation, to be at the bottom of the body politic; they were the exiles of another clime—the scum which every wind blows off the Irish shores—the pauper dregs which England flings out upon America. . . . In our country, at large, the different ranks melt and mingle into one another, so that it is as impossible to draw a decided line between any two contiguous classes as to divide a rainbow accurately into its various hues. But here the high, the middling, and the low had classed

themselves, and the laws of the vessel rigidly kept each inferior from stepping beyond the proper limits. . . . Here, therefore, was something analogous to that picturesque state of society, in other countries and earlier times, when each upper class excluded every lower one from its privileges, and when each individual was content with his allotted position, because there was no possibility of bettering it. I, by paying ten dollars, instead of six or four, had entitled myself to the aristocratic privileges of our floating community. But, to confess the truth, I would as willingly have been anywhere else as in the grand cabin. There was good company, assuredly;—among others a Canadian judge, with his two daughters, whose stately beauty and bright complexions made me proud to feel that they were my countrywomen; though I doubt whether these lovely girls would have acknowledged that their country was the same as mine.”

After studying the forward cabin,—with its second-class passengers feasting on relics of the first cabin banquet,—Hawthorne observes the crowd of the forward deck, who had no cabin at all, not even for their sleep; this being “on the wide promiscuous couch of the deck,” where men and women carelessly disrobed, and lay where they could. “A single lamp shed a dim ray over the scene, and there was also a dusky light from the boat’s furnaces which enabled me to distinguish quite as much as it was allowable to look upon, and a good deal more than it would be decorous to describe. . . . I know not what their habits might have been in their native land; but, since they quitted it, these poor people

had led such a life in the steerages of the vessels that brought them across the Atlantic, that they probably stepped ashore far ruder and wilder beings than they had embarked; and afterwards, thrown homeless upon the wharves of Quebec and Montreal, and left to wander whither they might, and subsist how they could, it was impossible for their moral natures not to have become wofully deranged and debased. I was grieved, also, to discern a want of fellow-feeling among them. They appeared, it is true, to form one community, but connected by no other bond than that which pervades a flock of wild geese in the sky, or a herd of wild horses in the desert. They were all going the same way, by a sort of instinct,—some laws of mutual aid and fellowship had necessarily been established,—yet each individual was lonely and selfish. Even domestic ties did not invariably retain their hallowed strength. . . . I found no better comfort than in the hope and trust that it might be with these homeless exiles, in their passage through the world, as it was with them and all of us in the voyage on which we had embarked together. As we had all our destined port, and the skill of the steersmen would suffice to bring us thither, so had each of these poor wanderers a home in futurity—and the God above them knew where to find it. It was cheering, also, to reflect that nothing short of settled depravity could resist the strength of moral influences, diffused throughout our native land; that the stock of home-bred virtue is large enough to absorb and neutralize so much of foreign vice; and that the outcasts of Europe, if not by their own choice, yet by an almost

inevitable necessity, promote the welfare of the country that receives them to its bosom."

It will not be wondered that Hawthorne's imagination was touched by the announcement that an Italian had discovered some chemical means of petrifying the dead, converting them as it were into statues.

"But Segato's greatest curiosity is a table, inlaid with two hundred pieces of stone (or what appears such) of splendid and variegated hues, admirably polished, and so extremely hard that a file can scarcely make the slightest scratch upon them. These stones, which would be mistaken for specimens of the most precious marbles, are different portions of the human body—the heart, liver, pancreas, spleen, tongue, brain, and arteries. Thus a multitude of men and women, once alive, have contributed fragments of their vital organs to form Segato's inlaid table; a poet, perhaps, has given his brain, an orator his tongue, a hypochondriac his spleen, and a love-sick girl her heart—for even so tender a thing as a young girl's heart can now be changed to stone. In her lifetime it may be all softness; but after death, if it pass through Segato's hands, a file can make no impression on it. . . . Instead of seeking the sculptor's aid to perpetuate the form and features of distinguished men, the public may henceforth possess the very shape and substance, when the aspiring souls have left them. The statesman may stand in the legislative hall where he once led the debate, as indestructible as the marble pillars which support the roof. He might be literally a pillar of state. Daniel Webster's form might help to uphold the Capitol, assisted by the great

of all parties, each lending a strong arm to the good cause. The warrior—our own old General—might stand forever on the summit of a battle-monument overlooking his field of victory at New Orleans. Nay, every mortal, when the heart has ceased to beat, may be straightway turned into a tombstone, and our cemeteries be thronged with the people of past generations, fixing their frozen stare upon the living world.

“But never may we—the writer—stand amid that marble crowd! In God’s own time we would fain be buried as our fathers were. We desire to give mortality its own. Our clay must not be balked of its repose. We are willing to let it moulder beneath the little hillock, and that the sods should gradually settle down, and leave no traces of our grave. We have no yearnings for the grossness of this earthly immortality. If somewhat of our soul and intellect might live in the memory of men, we should be glad. It would be an image of the ethereal and indestructible. But what belongs to earth, let the earth take it.”

So early did he sound the note that was last on his lips. In another paper the English Dr. Philip’s opinion (that we have two systems—a sensitive, which alternates between excitement and exhaustion, recovered from by sleep; a vital system that never sleeps) is carefully stated, and reflections added:

“Hence we may infer that no living creature has ever been more than half asleep, and that only the dead sleep sound; their bodies we mean; for their spirits are then more wide awake than ever. How strange and mysterious is our love of sleep! Fond as we are of life, we

are yet content to spend a third of its little space in what, so far as relates to our own consciousness, is a daily, or nightly, annihilation. We congratulate ourselves when we have slept soundly ; as if it were a matter of rejoicing that thus much of time has been snatched from the sum total of our existence—that we are several steps nearer to our graves without perceiving how we arrived thither, or gaining either knowledge or enjoyment on the way. Well ! Eternity will make up the loss ; on no other consideration can a wise man reconcile himself to the necessity of sleep.”

A little essay on “April Fools,” commonplace in the beginning, contains presently some neat satire, that on the author being plainly meant for himself :

“ He who has climbed or suffered himself to be lifted, to a station for which he is unfit, does but stand upon a pedestal to show the world an April Fool. The gray-haired man, who has sought the joys of wedlock with a girl in her teens, and the young girl who has wedded an old man for his wealth, are a pair of April Fools. The married couple who have linked themselves for life, on the strength of a week’s liking ; the ill-matched pair, who turn their roughest sides towards each other, instead of making the best of a bad bargain : the young man who has doomed himself to a life of difficulties by a too-early marriage ; the middle-aged bachelor who is waiting to be rich ; the damsel who has trusted her lover too far ; the lover who is downcast for a damsel’s fickleness ;—all these are April Fools. The farmer who has left a good homestead in New England, to migrate to the Mississippi Valley, or anywhere else on this side of heaven ; the



fresh-cheeked youth who has gone to find his grave in New Orleans ; the Yankees, who have enlisted for Texas ; the merchant who has speculated on a French war ; the author who writes for fame—or for bread—if he can do better : the student who has turned aside from the path of his profession, and gone astray in poetry and fancifulness ;—what are these but a motley group of April Fools ? And the wiseacre who thinks himself a fool in nothing. Oh, superlative April Fool !”

The allusion to Texas in the above passage is notable. Hawthorne was always associated with the Democratic party, which was sympathetic with the “filibusters” in Texas.

A wood-cut of George Washington, surrounded by emblems, is accompanied by an article which concludes with a suggestion of some novelty when it was written : “These emblems refer exclusively to Washington’s military deeds. But it should never be forgotten that it is not merely in the character of a hero that his fame shines resplendent, and will remain undimmed by the gathering mist of ages. It is true that no other man possessed the peculiar military talent, the caution mingled with boldness, the judgment, the equanimity which never sank too low nor rose too high, that were requisite to carry us triumphantly through the Revolutionary contest. Yet it may be justly said that, even while the war was raging, his civil virtues and abilities held no inferior place to those which marked him as a soldier. It was his moral strength of character that gave firmness to a tottering cause. Other great generals have been idolized by their armies because victory was sure to follow where

they led ; their fame has been won by triumphant marches and conquest on every field. Fortune has been the better half of all their deeds. But his defeats never snatched one laurel from the brow of Washington. In him his soldiers recognized qualities far superior to those of the mere military chieftain, and gave him their confidence as unreservedly at Long Island as at Yorktown. And in the troubled times that succeeded the Revolution, no influence but Washington's could have harmonized the discordant elements of our country ; no other arm could have upheld the State."

The picture of Washington, and several others, which appeared in *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*, were such to cause Hawthorne to insert in the number for August, 1836, an "editorial" note which may not have gratified the proprietor. "It is proper to remark that we have not had full control of the contents of the Magazine, inasmuch as the embellishments have chiefly been selected by the executive officers of the Boston Bewick Company, or by the engravers themselves."

When it is considered that the Company derived its name from the famous English artist and engraver, the reader will not be surprised at learning that its wretched illustrations preceded approaching death.

Even in small statistical paragraphs Hawthorne was apt to insert subtle sentences. In one on "Comparative Longevity," he finds a crevice for this seed : "It is not we hope irreverent to say that the Creator gave us our world in a certain sense unfinished, and left it to the ingenuity of man to bring it to the highest perfection of

which finite and physical things are capable." Amid dry antiquarian notes on "Bells," we find a pregnant passage: "Every little chapel in the wilderness, where the French Jesuits preached to the red-men, had its bell. We recollect to have seen, in the museum of Bowdoin College, one which we believe had belonged to the chapel of the martyred Father Ralle. After the priest was slain, and his altar desecrated by the bloody hands of the New England rangers, this bell, if we mistake not, lay hidden many years beneath the forest leaves; until being accidentally brought to light, it was suspended in the belfry of the College Chapel. The adventures of this bell would form a pretty and fanciful story, which we should be glad to write, if it were in our nature to be guilty of such nonsensical scribblings."

The smile behind his mask in this last sentence is an early instance of one of Hawthorne's favourite arts. What with this, his change of the inherited name, and his pseudonyms, the public is hardly chargeable for the "distinction" claimed in his preface to "Twice-told Tales," that he was "for a good many years, the obscurest man of letters in America." This hiding of his name was due, as has been said, to the necessity that Goodrich's *Token* should not appear to depend so much on a single writer. Hawthorne longed for recognition, and was deeply gratified by a notice of his stories in the London *Athenæum*, Nov. 7, 1835, declaring each of them to have "singularity enough to recommend it to the reader." "My worshipful self," he writes home, "is a very famous man in London, the *Athenæum* having noticed all my articles in the last *Token*, with long

extracts." This recognition of Hawthorne, credited to Henry Chorley, brought one sweet flower to the dismal vale from which he could not emerge. On Christmas Day, 1854, he wrote in his journal a pathetic passage: "I think I have been happier this Christmas than ever before—by my own fireside and with my wife and children about me—more content to enjoy what I have, less anxious for anything beyond it in this life. My early life was perhaps a good preparation for the declining half of life; it having been such a blank that any thereafter would compare favourably with it. For a long, long while I have occasionally been visited with a singular dream; and I have an impression that I have dreamed it ever since I have been in England. It is that I am still at college—or, sometimes even at school—and there is a sense that I have been there unconscionably long, and have quite failed to make such progress as my contemporaries have done; and I seem to meet some of them with a feeling of shame and depression that broods over me as I think of it, even when awake. This dream, recurring through all these twenty or thirty years, must be one of the effects of that heavy seclusion in which I shut myself up for twelve years after leaving college, when everybody moved on and left me behind. How strange that it should come now when I may call myself famous and prosperous!—and happy, too!"

In the last of the twelve years, mentioned in this passage, he received a cordial letter from one of his most successful classmates, the poet Longfellow, and in his reply (published by Mr. Lathrop) says:—

“It gratifies me that you have occasionally felt an interest in my situation ; but your quotation from Jean Paul about the ‘lark’s nest’ makes me smile. You would have been much nearer the truth if you had pictured me as dwelling in an owl’s nest ; for mine is about as dismal, and, like the owl, I seldom venture abroad till after dusk. By some witchcraft or other—for I really cannot assign any reasonable why and wherefore—I have been carried apart from the main current of life, and find it impossible to get back again. Since we last met, which you remember was in Sawtell’s room, where you read a farewell poem to the relics of the class—ever since that time I have secluded myself from society ; and yet I never meant any such thing, nor dreamed what sort of life I was going to lead. I have made a captive of myself, and put me into a dungeon, and now I cannot find the key to let myself out—and if the door were open, I should be almost afraid to come out. You tell me that you have met with troubles and changes. I know not what these may have been, but I can assure you that trouble is the next best thing to enjoyment, and that there is no fate in this world so horrible as to have no share in its joys or sorrows. For the last ten years I have not lived, but only dreamed of living. It may be true that there have been some unsubstantial pleasures, here in the shade, which I might have missed in the sunshine, but you cannot conceive how utterly devoid of satisfaction all my retrospects are. I have laid up no treasure of pleasant remembrances against old age ; but there is some comfort in thinking that future years can hardly fail to be more varied, and therefore more tolerable than the past.”

## CHAPTER IV.

HAWTHORNE'S early fear of entering freely into society may have been partly due to his consciousness of a certain morbid susceptibility to the influence of persons. Without sensual proclivities he was liable to the charms of beauty and graceful ways. "About the year 1833," writes his sister to Una Hawthorne, "your father; after a sojourn of two or three weeks at Swampscott, came home captivated, in his fanciful way, with a 'mermaid,' as he called her. He would not tell us her name, but said she was of the aristocracy of the village, the keeper of a little shop. She gave him a sugar heart, a pink one, which he kept a great while, and then (how boyish, but how like him!) he ate it. You will find her, I suspect, in 'The Village Uncle.' She is Susan. He said she had a great deal of what the French call *espèglerie*. At that time he had *fancies* like this whenever he went from home." In the story, apostrophising the Swampscott "mermaid," he says: "Nature wrought the charm. She made you a frank, simple, kind-hearted, sensible, and mirthful girl. Obeying nature, you did free things without indelicacy,

displayed a maiden's thoughts to every eye, and proved yourself as innocent as naked Eve."

But all of the fair fascinators Hawthorne met were not so guileless as the mermaid, and one of them caused a shadow to fall on his life, which was never lifted. In this case the young lady, whose name is withheld by Julian Hawthorne, was of high social position, and ambitious of capturing the new author in her train of admirers. She succeeded in engaging his sympathetic interest in her confidences, but not receiving his in return, concluded to utilise him in making herself the centre of a sensational situation. She confided to Hawthorne that one of his friends had attempted to practice the basest treachery upon her, and passionately invoked his championship. The accusation had no vestige of truth, and Hawthorne challenged his friend, only to be shown that he had been made a fool of by the artifices of a coquette anxious to be the heroine of a duel. The unhappy affair seemed to have ended with no worse result than Hawthorne's humiliation; but it was not so to be. Long after it was forgiven and forgotten by his friend, and transmuted into experience by himself, and in the moment of his happy betrothal, this incident returned on him with tragical and far-reaching sequels.

The Hon. Jonathan Cilley, his former college friend, was challenged by another member of Congress, Graves of Kentucky, and was induced, by the citation of Hawthorne's example, to fight the duel in which he fell. It was painful enough for Hawthorne to find the miserable infatuation and blunder that had seemed

buried rising up to end the brilliant career of his friend; but even this was not all. Cilley was shot down at the very moment when he was endeavouring to secure from the new democratic administration, with which he had much influence, a lucrative post for Hawthorne. This last fact, which would certainly be known to Hawthorne, is attested by a letter published in the London *Athenæum*, Aug. 17, 1889. It was written in 1843, by J. L. O'Sullivan to Hon. Henry A. Wise, asking his influence with the administration to appoint Hawthorne postmaster of Salem. In the Cilley duel Wise had been the second of Graves—not a principal, as Julian Hawthorne supposes—and O'Sullivan alludes to this fact. "One of Hawthorne's few intimate and fast friends was Cilley, who had been a college companion. It was he who first interested me in him—who was himself earnestly desirous to obtain some such suitable provision for him, and specifically this very appointment—who would have done it, had he not fallen, so unhappily for us all, and most of all, I doubt not, my dear sir, for you—and from whom it has always since rested on my mind as a bequeathed duty to be performed for him and in his name."

Hawthorne was not like Goethe, whose mother said that he could get rid of any grief by putting it into a poem. When he had embodied his mournful memories in such pieces as "The Haunted Mind," and "Fancy's Show-box," they all the more took up their abode with him. There is a great pain in some of his casual sentences, as where he exclaims: "Would that I had a folio to write, instead of an article of a dozen pages! Then



might I exemplify how an influence, beyond our control, lays its strong hand on every deed which we do, and weaves its consequences into an iron tissue of necessity."

When Hawthorne wrote the words just quoted (from "Wakefield"), the ghost of Cilley seemed finally laid, so far as his life was concerned, however it might still haunt his mind. During the summer before Cilley's death, he and Hawthorne met in Maine, for the first time since their graduation. The memorandum concerning him ("Am. Note Books," i. 87) shows that Cilley had become too much the politician to satisfy Hawthorne, though he felt the unimpaired depth of his classmate's friendship for himself. But when the young statesman had fallen into a grave, at which Hawthorne had so much cause to be the sincerest mourner, all his faults were buried, his virtues alone remained. Hawthorne was naturally eager to do justice to his friend's memory, and accepted the invitation of O'Sullivan to prepare a sketch of Cilley for *The Democratic Review*. I am indebted to Mr. G. M. Williamson for an interesting letter, addressed—"Postmaster, Thomaston, Maine":

"SALEM, March 15, 1838.

"SIR,—I was a particular friend of the late lamented Mr. Cilley; and the editor of *The Democratic Review* has requested me to write a biographical sketch of him for that publication. As it might appear indelicate in a stranger to intrude upon his family, I have been induced to apply to you, in the hope that you will have it in your power to favour me with a few facts respecting his life. In regard to his early life I can obtain information from other sources, and will trouble you merely for a brief account of the incidents which occurred during his residence in Thomaston. The date of his

marriage—his wife's name and parentage—his character and success as a lawyer—his entrance into political life, &c.—these are the principal topics on which information appears desirable.

“I trust that you will excuse the liberty which I have taken ; and, if inconvenient for you to comply with my request, please to hand this letter to some relation or friend of Mr. Cilley. As I have but a short time in which to prepare the biographical sketch, it will be necessary that any information should be sent me within two or three days after the receipt of this letter.

“Your obedient servant,

“NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.”

At the bottom of the letter is scrawled : “Mr. Fuler you may ansor this if you please perhaps it would be well so to do.”

Cilley had represented Thomaston in the Maine Legislature five years, but Hawthorne apparently got little by his application. His paper, which appeared in *The Democratic Review*, is remarkable on many accounts. There had been a schism in the democratic party in Maine, and Cilley represented the triumphant side. Hawthorne narrated all this with such art that it is difficult to say to which wing he leaned, and both might unite over the dead statesman to recognize the brilliant qualities he had displayed amid hostilities then ended. Hawthorne's reminiscence of his last meeting with his friend, and study of his character, are ideal in their way. Near the close comes a pregnant passage : “On the 23rd of February last, Mr. Cilley received a challenge from Mr. Graves, of Kentucky, through the hands of Mr. Wise, of Virginia. This measure, as is declared in the challenge itself, was grounded on Mr. Cilley's refusal to receive a message, of which Mr. Graves had been the

bearer, from a person of disputed respectability ; although no exception to that person's character had been expressed by Mr. Cilley ; nor need such inference have been drawn, unless Mr. Graves were conscious that public opinion held his friend in a doubtful light. The challenge was accepted, and the parties met on the following day. They exchanged two shots with rifles. After each shot a conference was held between the friends of both parties, and the most generous avowals of respect and kindly feeling were made on the part of Cilley towards his antagonist, but without avail. A third shot was exchanged ; and Mr. Cilley fell dead into the arms of one of his friends. . . . A challenge was never given on a more shadowy pretext ; a duel was never pressed to a fatal close in the face of such open kindness as was expressed by Mr. Cilley ; and the conclusion is inevitable, that Mr. Graves, and his principal second, Mr. Wise, have gone further than their own dreadful code will warrant them, and overstepped the imaginary distinction, which, on their own principles, separates manslaughter from murder.

“Alas that over the grave of a dear friend, my sorrow for the bereavement must be mingled with another grief — that he threw away such a life in so miserable a cause ! Why, as he was true to the Northern character in all things else, did he swerve from his Northern principles in this final scene ?”

Alas, none could answer this question so fully as the conscience of him who puts it : because his friend Hawthorne had once challenged a friend to mortal combat !

It was not to be supposed that the Hon. Henry A. Wise failed to take note of the virtual charge of murder published in the high democratic organ, or that he had not discovered the author. It is strange that O'Sullivan, editor of the *Review*, should have ventured to write to Wise the appeal in Hawthorne's behalf already quoted. At any rate it was ineffectual. Five years after Cilley's fall had ended Hawthorne's hope of the Salem postmastership, his ghost raised by our author's tribute, rose to bar the way. And we shall see that even this was not the last recoil on him of his quixotic championship of a coquette, nor the last time that Cilley's gory locks were shaken at him!

But the thread of our narrative must be resumed. Hawthorne was saved from despair, at the time of his friend's death, by a great joy. Soon after that tragedy he became the accepted lover of Sophia Amelia Peabody, daughter of a physician in Salem. There were six children in this family, and little means for their support; but the three daughters managed to secure excellent education, and became distinguished women. The eldest, Elizabeth, still lives in honoured age. She was taught Greek by Emerson, while he was a student of divinity at Harvard, and his estimate of her important services to American thought has already been mentioned. Elizabeth partly taught her younger sisters, Mary and Sophia. Of these the former became wife of the Hon. Horace Mann, and her biography of that eminent educator and statesman is among the most valuable of American books. Sophia, an invalid from childhood, had read a good deal, was of poetic tem-

perament, and had received lessons in painting from Allston. The long engagement is represented by the pretty pictures she sent her lover, and by his letters—more burning than the flame to which he committed hers, lest other eyes should read them. She made a picture of the "Gentle Boy" at the foot of a tree, which caused him to publish the story separately. The picture was etched by Elizabeth Peabody, and the dedication is: "To Miss Sophia A. Peabody this little Tale, to which her kindred Art has given value, is respectfully inscribed by the Author." This was in 1839, and the publication must have cost Hawthorne more than he could well spare; but it was characteristic of his nature not to count the cost of alabaster beside an offering of love.

It was not until three years later that the marriage took place. Julian Hawthorne attributes this three years' engagement to Hawthorne's apprehension that his marriage with an invalid would seriously affect his mother's happiness and health. As its actual effect was the reverse, one cannot repress some scepticism on this explanation. The more obvious difficulty was that Hawthorne had only twelve hundred dollars a year from a precarious office. As Miss Peabody could bring him no resources, there would appear good cause for the postponement. But meanwhile the betrothal appears to have made the three years wonderfully happy. The tomb and the dungeon which, he says, are in the depths of every heart, were overlaid with tender messages, and pretty dreams in pictures. Under the kiss of her hero Sophia, like another Dornröschen, had arisen, and left all her thorns of weakness and pain. On the other hand,

the spell that bound him was broken. "Sometimes,"—to quote one letter (1840)—"in our old Salem house, it seemed to me as if I had only life enough to know that I was not alive; for I had no wife then to keep my heart warm. But, at length, you were revealed to me, in the shadow of a seclusion deep as my own. I drew nearer and nearer to you, and opened my heart to you, and you came to me, and will remain for ever, keeping my heart warm and renewing my life with your own."

## CHAPTER V.

THE early culture of Hawthorne is especially traceable in his little allegory, "A Virtuoso's Collection." The idea itself, of the Wandering Jew making a selection of the creations of mythology and poetry, ancient and modern, and exhibiting them in the light spirit of the dilettante—all miracles being trivial compared with himself, and his own eternity too familiar for wonder—shows Hawthorne held fast by the glittering eye of the Day whose doom of unrest had passed on the intellectual age. In his seventeenth year (Oct. 1820), he writes to his sister that he has read "St. Leon," and adds, "I admire Godwin's novels, and intend to read them all." "St. Leon" is one of the earliest appearances of the "undying ore," in modern literature. That type of the human spirit, parted hopelessly from the faith on which it had so long found rest, destined to wander endlessly, rose in various shapes before all the intellectual children of the nineteenth century—Shelley, Goethe, Byron, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Heine, Quinet, Hans Anderson, Emerson, Tennyson, Richard Wagner (whose "Wodan, wanderer of the Air," and "Flying Dutchman, wanderer of the Sea," are brothers of the earth-travelled Ahasuerus).

These and many others were fascinated by this idealized Wandering Jew. The impression made by "St. Leon" on the youth is recorded in his reply to the Virtuoso, who offers him a draught of the elixir of life: "No; I desire no earthly immortality. Were man to live longer on the earth, the spiritual would die out of him." This theme yielded Hawthorne subtle variations—as in "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" (partly appropriated by Dumas), and later in "Septimius Felton," and the "Dolliver Romance."

In this connection a variant in "A Virtuoso's Collection," is especially interesting,—namely, "Peter Rugg." After observing Peter Schlemihl's shadow, the visitor perceives a figure of "restless aspect and dim, confused, questioning anxiety," who, "half starting from his seat, addressed me. 'I beseech you, kind sir,' said he, in a cracked, melancholy tone, 'have pity on the most unfortunate man in the world. For heaven's sake, answer me a single question! Is this the town of Boston?' 'You have recognized him now,' said the Virtuoso. 'It is Peter Rugg, the missing man. I chanced to meet him the other day, still in search of Boston, and conducted him hither.'"

The story of "Peter Rugg, the Missing Man," first appeared in Buckingham's *New England Galaxy*, Sept. 10, 1824—the year before Hawthorne's graduation. It had a wide newspaper circulation at the time, and has recently appeared in Mr. Stedman's compilation of selections from American literature. The author was William Austin, an eminent Boston lawyer, who died in 1841. In 1804, Austin published a volume of "Letters



from London," which show a personal acquaintance with authors in that city, Godwin among others. So he also had come in contact with "St. Leon." In the *New York Independent* (March 29, 1888) Mr. Wentworth Higginson describes Austin as "a precursor of Hawthorne."<sup>1</sup> The story of "Peter Rugg" follows pretty closely that of the "Flying Dutchman" (whose autograph, by the way, is in "A Virtuoso's Collection"). Overtaken by a storm at Menotomy, now Arlington, a few miles out of Boston, while driving with his child, he swore to get home that night, or never see home again. He left Boston in 1770, but for fifty years after is now and then

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Higginson finds "a touch of Hawthorne" in another of Austin's stories, "The late Joseph Natterstrom" (*New England Magazine*, July, 1831). This hero is a New York merchant, intrusted by a Turkish correspondent with a venture in which a fortune is made, which fortune the New Yorker invests and re-invests, always in the Turk's name, until the name of Natterstrom is utterly merged; and its faithful owner comes to be known only by the name of the Turk, Ebn Beg, anglicised into Eben Beck, whose wealth is always kept sacred, and is at last restored to him. Mr. Higginson has told me in conversation the plot of another of Austin's stories, not yet traced to its place of publication, "The Man of Cloaks." This cold-hearted man cannot get warm physically, and puts on cloak after cloak. But one day he does some act of kindness, and finds that one of his cloaks may be removed. By similar actions his cloaks are rendered successively superfluous, and his temperature is humanized. This certainly seems "Hawthornish." Mr. Higginson also notes in Austin's style something of what he felicitously calls Hawthorne's *penumbra*—suggesting doubts about his own statement, discrediting his own witnesses, consulting the reader as to an explanation, *e.g.*, "Whether Rugg, or whoever the person was, ever passed the bridge again, the toll-gatherer would never tell—and when questioned, seemed anxious to waive the subject."

met in his chaise, with his child, asking the way to Boston, but never getting there. In a continuation, however (1825), Peter Rugg reaches Boston at the moment when an auctioneer is offering for sale his own ancient estate, escheated to the commonwealth. The house is gone, the generation Rugg knew is gone, and in response to the wanderer's entreaty for recognition, a voice from the crowd said: "There is nothing strange here but yourself, Mr. Rugg. Time, which destroys and renews all things, has dilapidated your house and placed us here. You have suffered many years under an illusion. The tempest which your profanely defied at Menotomy has at length subsided; but you will never see home, for your house and wife and neighbours have all disappeared. Your estate indeed remains, but no home. You were cut off from the last age, and you can never be fitted to the present. Your home is gone, and you can never have another home in this world."

This tale is artfully rationalized in one of Hawthorne's most original tales. "Wakefield" pretends to be leaving home for a journey, but goes into the next street. For a time, in disguise, he watches the movements of his wife, but habit hardens his whim; sulkiness at the supposed inadequacy of Mrs. Wakefield's sensations, doubts about his reception should he return, difficulty of explanation, all help to dig a gulf between him and his house in the next street. He has lost the perception of singularity in his conduct; he is spell-bound. Standing out in the wintry evening he sees on the ceiling of his house his wife's shadow, thrown by the comfortable firelight. "He ascends the steps—heavily!—for twenty years have

stiffened his legs since he went down—but he knows it not. Stay, Wakefield! Would you go to the sole home that is left you? Then step into your grave! . . . Amid the seeming confusion of our mysterious world, individuals are so nicely adjusted to a system, and systems to one another, and to a whole, that by stepping aside for a moment, a man exposes himself to a fearful risk of losing his place for ever. Like Wakefield, he may become, as it were, the outcast of the universe.”

This is a version of what the voice from the crowd said to Peter Rugg, when he at last reached Boston. I have dwelt on the point more because it appears a fine illustration of legitimate intellectual lineage. Hawthorne is pre-eminent among modern, imaginative writers for the number and originality of his plots, his only equal in this respect, perhaps, being Robert Browning. I know of but one instance among Hawthorne's works of even partial imitation. “Feathertop” seems to be an imitation of Tieck's “Die Vogelscheuche.” In Tieck's satire, a figure of Robin Hood, made of leather, but exceeding smart, is used as a scarecrow; becoming vitalized by a shooting star, it appears as Baron Ledebinna, a great authority in literary circles. Tieck got his idea from Hauff's “Young Englishman,” wherein a monkey, dressed and drilled for the purpose, is introduced by an Englishman as his nephew, and passed off in the best German society. This Hawthorne had probably not seen, but his “American Note Books” show him studying German from “Tieck's tale” (1843). While he “plodded onward in the rugged and bewildering depths of Tieck's tale,” he is “sometimes dimly shaping out scenes of a tale”

("American Note Books," i. pp. 260, 261). But here is a coincidence. In 1840, when he certainly had not read Tieck, Hawthorne enters in his "Note Book": "To make a story out of a scarecrow, giving it odd attributes. From different points of view, it should appear to change—now an old man, now an old woman—a gunner, a farmer, or the Old Nick."

If Hawthorne read "Peter Rugg," on its appearance (1824), it certainly did not influence his earliest work. Nothing can be freer from Austin's *penumbra* than "Fanshawe." One might, I think, pick out the earlier compositions of Hawthorne by their lack of the mystical vein which runs through his characteristic works. One of his much admired pieces, "The Gentle Boy," pathetic as it is, pleases the reader mainly as a simple narrative of the early sufferings of a Quaker family. It has, indeed, a moral, but an unconscious one, in the influence of the boy on the Puritan who protected him. That the Puritan should have become a Quaker is an incident of some autobiographic value. Hawthorne appears to have studied the writings of the sect which his ancestors persecuted, and in "A Virtuoso's Collection," we find the startling sentence: "George Fox's hat impressed me with deep reverence as a relic of perhaps the truest apostle that has appeared on earth for these eighteen hundred years." This reverence for George Fox was characteristic of the rise of what was called "Transcendentalism," in New England. One of the first signs was Emerson's withdrawal from the pulpit because of his unwillingness to administer the sacrament of communion. This was the great religious event when Hawthorne was

twenty-eight years of age, and engaged on his stories. His writings were unconsciously and vaguely influenced by this movement, before his entrance into the transcendental community of Brook Farm.

For a New England boy of sixty years ago, whose weekly holiday morning was passed in a congregational edifice where ugliness was held a part of godliness, Bunyan was a benediction. The dismal walls were frescoed with visions of "The Pilgrim's Progress," and the plain windows passionate with the piously-named faërie of the old dreamer. Mr. Lathrop supposes that the idea of "A Virtuoso's Collection" may have been suggested by the exhibition to Christiana, at the Palace Beautiful, of one of the apples Eve ate of, and Jacob's ladder. My friend Mr. Garnett, of the British Museum, once pointed out to me the suggestion of such an ideal curiosity-shop in the "Peau de Chagrin" of Balzac; but Mr. Lathrop's view seems to me probable. One of the objects shown, it will be remembered, was Christian's burden. "'O pray let us open it!' cried I. 'For many a year I have longed to know its contents.' 'Look into your own consciousness and memory,' replied the Virtuoso. 'You will there find a list of whatever it contains.'"

"The Celestial Railroad" (which first appeared in *The Democratic Review*, May, 1843) is the finest tribute ever paid to Bunyan's genius. It is also the height of Hawthorne's humour. The opening of railways in regions where in boyhood he had journeyed on foot, the frequent explosions and catastrophes which attended the earlier experiments in steam travelling, the new iron forges of New York, the lighting of Fredonia, New York, from its

natural gas springs—entered in his “Note Book” (1837) with the query, “What moral could be drawn from this?”—supplied ample scenery; and the new optimistic theology of Boston, which explained away biblical menaces, and smoothed the ancient religious difficulties, presented impressive contrasts for the intellectual hermit whose cell was still radiant with Bunyan’s visions. Some of Hawthorne’s acquaintances resented this satire, in which the cave of Pope and Pagan was occupied by Giant Transcendentalism, “who shouted after us, but in so strange a phraseology that we knew not what he meant, nor whether to be encouraged or affrighted”; though the dreamer is careful not to make this giant a friend of the new enterprize by which Mr. Smooth-it-away and Apollyon pretend to convey pilgrims to the Celestial City. The turning of Satan and Hell into metaphors by the Unitarians and Universalists no doubt gave rise to a good deal of unctuous self-indulgence. It is more clear now than fifty years ago that the naturalistic optimism which resulted from the revolution against orthodox pessimism, failed to provide in place of the Cross any means whereby humanity might be relieved of its heavy burdens, inward and outward. “The Celestial Railroad” is, therefore, more likely to be appreciated by a liberal reader of to-day than when it was written. It was taken seriously by theological opponents of rationalism, and its hits at the Rev. Mr. Clog-the-spirit, and Rev. Dr. Wind-of-doctrine, were by no means taken to heart by themselves. The churches in every street of Vanity Fair were of course Unitarian churches. The piece was actually published by the American Sunday School Union (Philadelphia),

without the author's name, and with the following note :—

“The following allegory (though not particularly designed for children) very strikingly sets forth a class of false opinions and practices which are common among men. It is an admirable Commentary on the declaration of our divine Saviour, *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat ; and Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*”<sup>1</sup>

There are evidences of Hawthorne's careful reading of Shakespeare, but none of any important gains from that source. The temporary influence of Walter Scott may be traced in heroic attitudes of certain figures in the early colonial tales. But from first to last he is an insatiable reader of classical legends, of “Arabian Nights Tales,” of all fairy tales. These weird or aerial creatures peep out from beneath Yankee hats, bonnets, and veils ; and we may fancy the whole troop coming with their gifts to the christening—if she ever was christened—of his first-born child, Una, who stepped out of Spenser's poem.

But this allusion may remind the reader that we have wandered too far ahead in this interlude.

“I have now, or shall soon have, a sharper spur to exertion, which I lacked at an earlier period.” So wrote Hawthorne to Longfellow in June, 1837. What was

<sup>1</sup> In 1847 the “Celestial Railroad” also appeared apparently as a tract (Lowell: D. Skinner). But I have never met with any copies of these pious publications except in the Hawthorne collection of my friend, G. M. Williamson.

this spur? He had just begun a friendship with Sophia Peabody, and may have foreseen the future.

In March of the same year his first volume had appeared, the first series of "Twice-told Tales." It brought him an excellent review by Longfellow, in *The North American Review*, and awakened the interest of literary men; but these were few; or perhaps it should be said that the literary men and women had been generally carried away into spiritual and social enthusiasms of the time. The agitation against slavery was rising like a storm; the socialistic propaganda of Robert Owen's followers was filling the land. The cultured public in and around Boston, which Hawthorne might naturally have interested, was preoccupied with the transcendental lectures of Emerson and the controversies which had sprung up around that mildest of revolutionary philosophers. As for the nation at large, its reading time was fully occupied with comfortably pirated editions of Scott, Dickens, and other English writers. It may perhaps be regarded as a success that Hawthorne's first book sold over six hundred copies! Him it brought no money. With the prospect of marriage to a lady without means, he made for himself the discovery which all American authors before and since have made, that no family can be supported by authorship in a country where piracy on foreign authors is permitted. American authors who have neither inherited nor married wealth have invariably been compelled to sell their main time and strength to colleges, professions, journals, magazines, or offices, or perhaps to reside abroad. In no case has literature,



pure and simple, ever supported an American author, unless, possibly, if he were a bachelor. As a bachelor Hawthorne had found his slender income sufficient, but with the prospect of a family came the necessity for an occupation other than literature. "I can turn my pen to all sorts of drudgery," he writes to Longfellow, "such as children's books, &c., and by and by I shall get some editorship that will answer my purpose. Frank Pierce, who was with us at college, offered me his influence to obtain an office in the Exploring Expedition; but I believe that he was mistaken in supposing that a vacancy existed. If such a post were attainable, I should certainly accept it; for, though fixed so long to one spot, I have always had a desire to run round the world."

Soon after this—in the summer of 1837—Hawthorne went on the happy excursion in Maine, described in his "American Note Books." There he was with his friend, Horatio Bridge, whose generous guarantee had alone induced the publisher to issue "Twice-told Tales," and there he met his college friend, Cilley. It was soon after that this Congressman was engaged in preparing an application for the appointment of Hawthorne to a lucrative office, when he fell in a duel, as already related.

George Bancroft, under the normal necessity of authors, had obtained the Boston Custom House, and he appointed Hawthorne to be weigher and gauger, at a salary of £240. Hawthorne entered on his duties early in January, 1839. Unpleasant as it is to reflect on the situation now, the circumstances made this a happier position for Hawthorne than any which had impawned his pen. Not only did the appointment save him from

further brooding over his friend's death with a feeling of participating in the guilt of it, but from a bitter consciousness that he was missing the real world. "I have," he had written to Longfellow, "great difficulty in the lack of materials; for I have seen so little of the world that I have nothing but thin air to concoct my stories of, and it is not easy to give a little semblance to such shadowy stuff. Sometimes through a peep-hole I have caught a glimpse of the real world, and the two or three articles in which I have portrayed these glimpses please me better than the others." But now, seven months later (January 12, 1839), he writes to the same friend, merrily, but with much meaning in his mirth, "I have no reason to doubt my capacity to fulfil the duties; for I don't know what they are. They tell me that a considerable portion of my time will be unoccupied, the which I mean to employ in sketches of my new experience, under some such titles as follows: 'Scenes in Dock,' 'Voyages at Anchor,' 'Nibblings of a Wharf Rat,' 'Trials of a Tide-Waiter,' 'Romance of the Revenue Service,' together with an ethical work in two volumes, on the subject of Duties, the first volume to treat of moral and religious duties, and the second of duties imposed by the Revenue Laws, which I begin to consider the most important class."

Twelve hundred dollars a year, and that dependent on the *aura popularis* of the next presidential election, was not enough to marry on. But he came in contact with real life; he was awake.

Mr. Lathrop mentions that he used to get to the wharf at the earliest possible hour, because the wages

of the wharf labourers depended on their number of hours. His life was thus severe, but, he wrote, "mine is a healthy weariness, such as needs only a night's sleep to remove it. From henceforth forever I shall be entitled to call the sons of toil my brethren, and shall know how to sympathize with them, seeing that I likewise have risen with the dawn, and borne the fervour of the midday sun, nor turned my heavy footsteps homeward till eventide. Years hence, perhaps, the experience my heart is acquiring now will flow out in truth and wisdom."

Madox Brown painted a fine picture of Carlyle and F. D. Maurice standing near some men with hods at work on a building in the street. Carlyle breaks into laughter on observing some ladies daintily holding their skirts from the rubbish; Maurice looks sadly on the toilers. Why will not some artist paint us the historian Bancroft and Hawthorne beside their coal-heavers on the Boston wharf? So far as Hawthorne is concerned, the artist need only peruse the pictures unconsciously drawn of himself, inserted at the end of the first volume of his "American Note Books."

"I have been measuring coal all day, on board of a black little British schooner, in a dismal dock at the north end of the city. Most of the time I paced the deck to keep myself warm. . . . Sometimes I descended into the dirty little cabin of the schooner, and warmed myself by a red-hot stove, among biscuit barrels, pots and kettles, sea-chests, and innumerable lumber of all sorts—my olfactories, meanwhile, being greatly refreshed by the odour of a pipe, which the captain or some one of

his crew was smoking. But at last came the sunset, with delicate clouds, and a purple light upon the islands; and I blessed it, because it was the signal of my release."

"When I shall be free again I will enjoy all things with the fresh simplicity of a child of five years old. I shall grow young again, made all over anew. I will go forth and stand in a summer shower, and all the worldly dust that has collected on me shall be washed away at once, and my heart will be like a bank of fresh flowers for the weary to rest upon."

"Rejoice with me, for I am free from a load of coal which has been pressing upon my shoulders throughout all the hot weather. I am convinced that Christian's burden consisted of coal."

"Salt is white and pure—there is something holy in salt."

"I have observed that butterflies—very broad-winged and magnificent butterflies—frequently come on board of the salt-ship, where I am at work. What have these bright strangers to do on Long Wharf, where there are no flowers nor any green thing, nothing but brick store-houses, stone piers, and the bustle of toilsome men, who neither look up to the blue sky, nor take note of these wandering gems of the air? I cannot account for them, unless they are the lovely fantasies of the mind."

"For three or four days I have been observing a little Mediterranean boy from Malaga, not more than ten or eleven years old, but who is already a citizen of the world, and seems to be just as gay and contented on the deck of a Yankee coal-vessel as he could be while

playing beside his mother's door. It is really touching to see how free and happy he is—how the little fellow takes the whole wide world for his home, and all mankind for his family. He talks Spanish—at least that is his native tongue; but he is also very intelligible in English, and perhaps he likewise has smatterings of the speech of other countries, whither the winds may have wafted this little sea-bird. He is a Catholic; and yesterday being Friday he caught some fish and fried them for his dinner in sweet oil, and really they looked so delicate that I almost wished he would invite me to partake. Every once in a while he undresses himself and leaps overboard, plunging down beneath the waves as if the sea were as native to him as the earth. Then he runs up the rigging of the vessel as if he meant to fly away through the air. I must remember this little boy, and perhaps I may make something more beautiful of him than these rough and imperfect touches would promise."

"I pray that in one year more I may find some way of escaping from this unblest Custom House; for it is a very grievous thralldom. I do detest all offices—all at least that are held on a political tenure. And I want nothing to do with politicians. Their hearts wither away, and die out of their bodies. Their consciences are turned to india-rubber, or to some substance as black as that, and which will stretch as much. One thing, if no more, I have gained by my Custom House experience—to know a politician."

The prayer in this last paragraph was precisely answered: the Van Buren administration was succeeded

by that of Harrison, and short shrift was made of Bancroft and Hawthorne. When Hawthorne was entering office he was afflicted on meeting the ejected face of the man he had supplanted, and recorded his protest against "rotation in office"; but Hawthorne's successor saw no sadness in his face. The Custom House was needed, no doubt, when his genius was pale; it was a two years' course, as it were, of cod-liver oil, and he had got whatever picturesqueness there was in the bottles. But he was robust now, and the nasty stuff was disguised by no sense of benefit. So he ran out like a happy child into the summer shower, the customs dust was washed away, and his heart was a bank of fresh flowers.

## CHAPTER VI.

FOR his two years' hard work in the Boston Custom House, Hawthorne received twenty-four hundred dollars. When he left it he had saved one thousand. He had also the nearly completed manuscript of "Grandfather's Chair,"—stories for children clustered around a chair given by the Earl of Lincoln to his daughter, Lady Arabella Johnson, and purporting to have passed in succession to a number of persons figuring in colonial history—Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, Sir Harry Vane, and others. At this time Miss Elizabeth Peabody had set up in Boston her famous West Street establishment, where the *Dial* was published, and various books of the new transcendental age. She brought out "Grandfather's Chair," and it was also published by Wiley and Putnam in New York. Meanwhile "Twice-told Tales" (first series) had been nearly four years before the public, but, despite the good reviews by Longfellow and others, the publishers (Munroe and Co.) now reported that the sales had not covered expenses.

The alternatives seemed now a surrender to Giant Despair or to Giant Transcendentalism.

Carlyle had spoken to the youth of America with a thunder which "deprived them of sleep"; but to these sleepless ones Emerson brought sweetest dreams. Unhappily, it is the way of day-dreams to unfit the dreamers for the prosaic world with its light of common day. The Peabodys, including Hawthorne's Sophia, were Emersonian enthusiasts, and probably it was largely through their influence that the way-worn pilgrim—finding the old world a mere city of Destruction for a man without trade, profession, or means—sought a new world through the portals of Brook Farm community. Those who have imagined the nature of Hawthorne to be unsocial may wonder at his membership of a socialistic fraternity. But those who knew the man well recognised in him a desire for such fellowship as would leave undisturbed the inner sanctuary where his heart and intellect sat at their sacred task.<sup>1</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> One who knew him well, Dr. George B. Loring of Salem—now (1890) United States Minister in Portugal—says, in a letter I have from him, that Hawthorne had a two-fold existence—a real and a supernatural. "He was fond of the companionship of all who were in sympathy with the real and human side of life." But "it was the supernatural element in Hawthorne which gave him his high distinction. When he entered upon his work as a writer he left this personality entirely behind him. In this work he allowed no interference, he asked for no aid. He was shy of those whose intellectual power and literary fame might seem to give them a right to enter his sanctuary. The working of his mind was so sacred and mysterious to him, that he was impatient of any attempt at familiarity, or even intimacy with the divine power within him. Hawthorne said of himself that his work grew in his brain as it went on, and was beyond his control or direction—for nature was his guide. Theodore Parker once said to me he had no idea that Hawthorne understood his own genius or comprehended the philo-



was just what Brook Farm promised. There was to be an unconventional society of men and women, sick as himself of politics, and unfit for the meanness of barter; the supply of food and raiment was to be reduced to a minimum of cost by co-operation and communal life on that lower plane; and the result was to be a release of much time for each, and security for the solitude demanded for the individual genius. The sage Mani said, "The populousness of my body is the solitude of my soul." Brook Farm was to be as the social body; its perfected organization of many functions was to free from the curse of multifarious toil the thinker of slender means. Had Hawthorne earlier met Emerson himself he might not have ventured his all in this dream. For Emerson, from his retreat at Concord, where society and solitude so happily harmonised, saw the whole Brook Farm incident as a transcendental pic-nic. But with "The Blithedale Romance" in his hand, no reader can lament that Hawthorne sowed his last thousand dollars for a harvest so rich.

Not long ago I took the railway which now goes within three miles of that Land of Beulah. The Yankee driver I found at the station could remember no previous pilgrim to Brook Farm, and had never heard that any important people had dwelt there. I paused at a house which I had managed to identify as the House of the sophical meaning of many of the circumstances or characters found in his books; that his characters were true to nature in spite of himself. And so in great loneliness he toiled, conscious that no human power could guide him, and that human sympathy was of no avail. The sacredness of his genius was to him like the sacredness of his love,"

Interpreter—there Margaret Fuller held her “Conversations”—but it seemed dismal and deserted. Farther on was the large building which the dreamers called the The Hive. There the common table was spread. It is now a German Lutheran orphanage, its wall decorated with Scripture texts. The poorly clad children were playing merrily in the ill-kept “yard,” and I presently saw them enjoying their homely fare in the room where once sat men and women who have given shining names to literature. They were summoned by the same bell, which still sounds from the old cupola. The good German matron had never heard of any one of those notable people, and knew nothing of the previous history of the place. It was too disenchanting to try and identify the dilapidated frame cabins here and there with places that bore the poetical names of The Pilgrim House, The Eyrie, The Nest, The Cottage. It was pleasanter to ramble through the large forest, carpeted with sun-glints and wild flowers, where passed the wondrous masquerades so finely described by Hawthorne. Alas, of all those scenes the sole relique is a long half-decayed table, with benches around on which one dare not sit. The neighbouring streamlet ran on as in the days when in this Xanadu the visionaries, under pleasure-dome of the sky, fed on honey-dew and milk of Paradise, sometimes drawn from the udder by Hawthorne’s own fingers! But through what fathomless caverns has passed the sacred stream that once flowed here! Brownson became a great Roman Catholic champion; Charles Dana founded the New York *Sun*, which has given him wealth and influence; George Ripley had a success-

ful career on the New York *Tribune*; George Curtis is now an honoured editor and orator—and he has never forgotten the dreams of his youth.

It was significant now to read the texts on the walls of The Hive. Of the many communities which in those years sprang up in America, only those survive which were based on some religious enthusiasm—Moravian, Shaker, Mormon. The Brook Farmers were mainly philosophical idealists, for the most part freethinkers, who believed that nature would cherish the ideals they had projected into nature. But Boston removed no farther from the Arctic Circle; New England granite remained granite; the butcher and baker still demanded vulgar coin for their products. Hawthorne did not become a financier by being made chairman of the Finance Committee. This pretty flower could not be acclimatised in New England, if indeed on earth; it soon burst, and its winged seeds floated through the world, took root, and bore each its several flower—on all, however, some tint of that planted with such faith and hope at Brook Farm.

Hawthorne, *suo more*, formed his friendships chiefly with those of the community without special relation to literature, but with heart and culture. George Bradford, his old friend—beloved of all best men; Frank Farley, a Western pioneer, of precarious sanity; Rev. Warren Burton, who wrote a book on landscape art—are mentioned by Mr. Lathrop as Hawthorne's particular associates at Brook Farm.

Hawthorne arrived at Brook Farm, April 12, 1841, in a snowstorm. On the next day he writes to Sophia

Peabody : " Here I am in a polar Paradise ! I know not how to interpret this aspect of nature—whether it be of good or evil omen to our enterprise. But I reflect that the Plymouth Pilgrims arrived in the midst of storm. . . . I laud my stars, however, that you will not have your first impressions of (perhaps) our future home from such a day as this."

On May the 3rd, he writes to his sister Louisa a letter, printed by his son, Julian :

Mr. Ripley summoned us into the cow-yard, and introduced me to an instrument with four prongs, commonly entitled a dung-fork. With this tool I have already assisted to load twenty or thirty carts of manure, and shall take part in loading three hundred more. Besides, I have planted potatoes and pease, cut straw and hay for the cattle, and done various other mighty works. This very morning I milked three cows, and I milk two or three every night and morning. The weather has been so unfavourable that we have worked comparatively little in the fields ; but, nevertheless, I have gained strength wonderfully—grown quite a giant, in fact—and can do a day's work without the slightest inconvenience. In short, I am transformed into a complete farmer.

" This is one of the most beautiful places I ever saw in my life, and as secluded as if it were a hundred miles from any city or village. There are woods, in which we can ramble all day without meeting anybody or scarcely seeing a house. Our house stands apart from the main road, so that we are not troubled even with passengers looking at us. Once in a while we have a transcendental visitor, such as Mr. Alcott ; but generally we pass whole days without seeing a single face save those of the brethren. The whole fraternity eat together ; and such a delectable way of life has never been seen on earth since the days of the early Christians.

" The thin frock which you made for me is considered a most splendid article, and I should not wonder if it were to become the summer uniform of the community. I have a thick frock likewise ; but it is rather deficient in grace, though extremely warm and com-

fortable. I wear a tremendous pair of cow-hide boots, with soles two inches thick—of course, when I come to see you I shall wear my farmer's dress."

This letter is signed, "Nath. Hawthorne, *Ploughman.*" There is a tone about it, as if the writer felt himself to be playing at work, but he was not conscious of it. He declares that he looked forward to so passing years, if not a lifetime, and in the spring of 1842 looked about for the site of a house which he hoped to build for his bride. But one day, when he was hoeing his potatoes, there rose in him an overpowering conviction that he was out of his own place, and in somebody else's place. So he vanished. He left on good terms with all, asked back nothing that he had invested, and, at thirty-eight, began life again—his means at lowest ebb.

Hawthorne remained in the community about a year. But before he left he had made a discovery that he had never been really there at all. "The real Me was never an associate of the community; there has been a spectral Appearance there, sounding the horn at daybreak, and milking the cows, and hoeing potatoes, and raking hay, toiling in the sun, and doing me the honour to assume my name. But this spectre was not myself." But the great eye of Hawthorne was there, and every scene was pictured on it. It was the sufficient *raison d'être* of Brook Farm that it produced that truly American novel—"The Blithedale Romance." The other principal works of Hawthorne relate to imported customs and characters—the most American among them, perhaps, being that which is mounted amid the scenery of Rome.

But "The Blithedale Romance" is a genuine transcript of original New World life. Hollingsworth, Zenobia, Priscilla, Coverdale, still survive. The locality was trampled out of shape when it was made into Camp Andrew in 1861, but the Utopia has not passed away. There is a bit of Brook Farm in Howells, in Edward Bellamy, in all the younger generation of writers, who talk the same dream as if it had never perished, nor its beautiful monument been built by the art of Hawthorne.

Hawthorne and Sophia Peabody had grown old enough and wise enough to discover the secret of the only paradise which the world admits—to love and be beloved, to dwell in the neighbourhood of best heads and hearts, to follow one's own genius. So they repaired to Concord, and there married—resolving that if they must be poor they would be poor together, and at least rich in mutual love and high thinking.

## CHAPTER VII.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE and Sophia Peabody were married on July 9, 1842. He was in his thirty-ninth, she in her thirty-second, year, but no pair in their teens were ever more rapt in love's young dream. *Il faut passer la jeunesse*, and hitherto neither of them had really known the meaning of youth. Probably neither of them had ever attended a dance, or knew how to dance. Outside of their families, the author appears to have never known any lady except the one he asked to become his wife, and it is probable that she was much in the same case as regards the male sex. They thus represented to each other their respective divisions of the human race, and Hawthorne appropriately described his wife and himself as Adam and Eve. They secured the lease of a fair enough paradise—the Old Manse. It was as picturesque as her pencil could desire, and haunted by precisely the romantic-historic legends and figures in which his pen delighted.

Fortunately, too, it did not cost much ; for they were beginning married life on slender expectations, and even these soon failed them. *The Democratic Review*, published at Washington, had engaged him to write regular

contributions, and began paying fairly; but it soon collapsed. The literary horizon contracted to a more substantial vegetable garden. It was the great era of book piracy. Tom Appleton, a well-known wit, used to call Hawthorne a "boned pirate," but he could not have so described the publisher of that period. He was a thoroughly organized pirate. "I continue," writes Hawthorne to a friend, "to scribble tales with good success so far as regards empty praise, some notes of which, pleasant enough to my ears, have come from across the Atlantic. But the pamphlet and piratical system has so far broken up all regular literature, that I am forced to work hard for small gains." The allusion was to the recognition his tales had received from Henry Chorley, in the *Athenæum*. But American literary men were no whit behind those of England in such recognition. Poe's first growls at the rival story-teller had ended in praise. Longfellow and Hillard filled the air with his merits, and were always contriving how they might bring on Hawthorne some golden shower from the firmament of brass.

And here may be mentioned an incident which added gratitude to the friendship of Longfellow. Hawthorne had got hold of a romantic incident of French Canada, which he intended to weave into a tale. He happened, however, to tell the substance of it to an acquaintance named Conolly, who told it to Longfellow. It presently appeared as Longfellow's "Evangeline." Hawthorne, without any hint of his loss, wrote a fine review of the poem, saying of Longfellow: "By this work of his maturity he has placed himself on a higher eminence



than he had yet attained, and beyond the reach of envy. Let him stand, then, at the head of our list of native poets, until some one else shall break up the rude soil of our American life, as he has done, and produce from it a lovelier and nobler flower than this poem of *Evangeline*." Longfellow, it would appear, had understood from Conolly that the tale was sent him by Hawthorne, for he wrote: "Perhaps I can pay you back in part your own generous gift, by giving you a theme for story, in return for a theme for song. It is neither more nor less than the history of the Acadians, after their expulsion as well as before. Felton has been making some researches in the State archives, and offers to resign the documents into your hands. Pray come and see me about it without delay. Come so as to pass a night with us, if possible, this week; if not a day and night." From what I have heard, on good authority, Hawthorne meant to use the story himself, though Longfellow never knew the full magnanimity of the review above quoted. Conolly having afterwards asked some favour of Hawthorne, the latter replied, "I will do it, and thereby prove myself the most Christian man in the world." There is, however, another version of the story in Fields' "Yesterdays," according to which Longfellow asked Hawthorne if he had made up his mind not to use the story.

Hawthorne was not inclined to undertake the Acadians. His "Note Books" show that his inner garden was already over-thick with blossoms which could never mature fruits in the chill ("piratical") atmosphere under which American literature was suffering—still suffers, albeit with mitigations.

But we return now to the roses that bloomed around the Old Manse, and the "mosses" that grew on it. This ancient homestead stands beside an invisible stream of history. Generations of ministers had dwelt there, leading the village from Puritanism to liberalism. Under its windows occurred the first resistance to English troops in the Revolution, witnessed by Emerson's grandfather, who resided there—nay, his father used to claim that he was "in arms" that day (being then an infant). There Emerson wrote his first book, "Nature," which began a revolution equal in importance to that which set there the monument dedicated by his famous hymn to the farmers, who here "fired the shot heard round the world." But the Old Manse is beside the visible Concord River—a gentle stream, with islets, adorned with lilies in summer and rosettes of the hoar-frost in winter; blithe, too, with pleasure-boats at one time, and troops of skaters at another. As for the house itself, though the present writer has been familiar with it for thirty-five years, he could never examine it closely. Walking down the long avenue of balm-of-Gilead trees he could see only the figures of scholars, of gracious ladies who dwelt there in the past, and, on entering, the beautiful widow Ripley and her daughters, who made it the home of finest hospitality, intellectual and social.

It was an ideal home for the Hawthornes. Had the owners foreseen the value to be added to it as an estate by his "Mosses from an Old Manse," they might well have paid him to reside there. As it was, his severest sufferings from poverty were there endured. However, he and his wife had health and love for their guests, and

were willing to spare others, and for a long time fairly checkmated surly fate. Hawthorne turned poverty into a jest. The arm of a chair comes off as he touches it, and he throws his wife into fits of laughter by saying majestically, "I will flee my country." His dressing-gown has an appalling vacuum, and he remarks on the strangeness that, being "a man of the largest rents in the country," he has not more ready money. "On Christmas Day we had a truly paradisaical dinner of preserved quince and apple, dates, and bread and cheese, and milk."

Hawthorne was never more careful about his affairs than now, in his "Eden," as he called it. "I wish," he writes to his friend Hillard (in a letter of November 26, 1843, printed in the *Athenæum*, August 10, 1889), "I wish at some leisure moment you would give yourself the trouble to call into Munroe's bookstore and inquire about the state of my 'Twice-told Tales.' At the last accounts (now about a year since) the sales had not been enough to pay the expenses; but it may be otherwise now—else I shall be forced to consider myself a writer for posterity; or at all events not for the present generation. Surely the book was puffed enough to meet with a sale. What the devil's the matter? We are very well here, and, as usual, preposterously happy."

Even amid poverty the "New Adam and Eve" declined to receive a boarder, however congenial. Margaret Fuller's sister had just married Ellery Channing, the poet, and it was suggested that they should live at the Old Manse. Mrs. Hawthorne rather favoured the plan, but Hawthorne wrote to "Dear Margaret,"—"Had it been

proposed to Adam and Eve to receive two angels into their paradise, as *boarders*, I doubt whether they would have been pleased to consent." He admits that he had proposed to receive George Bradford. "In doing so I was influenced less by what Mr. Bradford is, than by what he is not; or rather his negative qualities seem to take away his personality, and leave his excellent characteristics to be fully and fearlessly enjoyed. I doubt whether he be not precisely the rarest man in the world." One meaning of which was that Hawthorne was shy of literary men, such as Ellery Channing, but desired the companionship of men of culture and character who were not authors. But he had "misgivings" as to undertaking such responsibility even for Bradford—his friend both at Salem and Brook Farm—and I believe no arrangement of the kind was reached.

But Hawthorne's shyness of literary men wore off among such as he found at Concord. He enjoyed the companionship of Ellery Channing—who, Emerson said, wrote "poetry for poets," and who has put Hawthorne into several of them. He became much attached to Thoreau, who used to take him out in his boat, the "Pond Lily." He enjoyed talks with Margaret Fuller, who passed much of her time at Concord; and with Miss Elizabeth Hoar, who had the qualities he ascribed to George Bradford, being at the same time not an author. Mr. Keyes, an eminent citizen of Concord, told me that he found Hawthorne good company. "I enjoyed his 'Twice-told Tales,' and remember reading them in the Old Manse in 1841, to Dr. Ripley, then aged ninety-one. But Hawthorne had to be captured.

I used to capture him now and then, and he was pleasant enough." Mrs. Keyes was a friend of the Hawthornes, but when, at the age of twenty, she was introduced to Hawthorne at the Manse, she was frightened, and glad to get off. She remembers being there one day when Hawthorne returned from a journey. When Mrs. Hawthorne saw him coming down the avenue, she said to her friend, "Oh, do go! I wouldn't for the world have anybody see me meet my husband."

But what of Emerson?

Could Michel Angelo have reappeared, in the Concord of those days, he might have found in its two great authors models for a new Morn and Twilight. Hawthorne's portrait of Emerson, and his environment of pilgrims ("Mosses") is one of the most powerful things he ever wrote. "For myself there had been epochs of my life when I, too, might have asked of this prophet the master-word that should solve me the riddle of the universe. But now, being happy, I felt as if there were no question to be put, and therefore admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness, but sought nothing from him as a philosopher. It was good, nevertheless, to meet him in the wood-paths, or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure, intellectual gleam diffused about his presence like the garment of a shining one; and he so quiet, so simple, so without pretension, encountering each man alive as if expecting to receive more than he could impart. But it was impossible to dwell in his vicinity without inhaling, more or less, the mountain atmosphere of his lofty thought, which, in the

brains of some people, wrought a singular giddiness—new truth being as heady as new wine.”

It was Emerson who inspired the finest allegorical tale ever written—“The Great Stone Face.” The most impressive natural phenomenon in America is the stone face of Profile Mountain, which so appeals to the imagination, that in our college days we saw it as the face of Carlyle, and it still rises before the writer of this when he passes the pathetic face looking across the Thames to its far horizon. With poetic felicity Hawthorne represents the boy Ernest, awaiting fulfilment of the prophecy that a great man should come, who would be known by his resemblance to the stone face. The people recognize him in the millionaire, Mr. Gathergold, then in the victorious “Old Blood-and-Thunder” [General Jackson], and in Old Stony Phiz [Daniel Webster]; but Ernest cannot recognize in either the countenance on the mountain. And when at last all others recognize the coming one in Ernest himself, his eyes are still looking for one worthier of the Great Stone Face.

Emerson, on his part, was the personal friend of Hawthorne, and recognized his power; but he could not enjoy his writings. There was not enough sunshine in them for so devout an optimist. Himself brought up among liberal people,—his youth passed at the feet of Channing—he knew little of the Puritan nightmare that haunted every pillow in the Salem of Hawthorne’s boyhood. The tales of secret sin, of veiled wrong, of inherited dooms, were to him too pathological. “He holds a dark steed hard”—so he said of Hawthorne. He told me that he thought Haw-

thorne's "Recollections of a gifted Woman" (in "Our Old Home"), the best thing he ever wrote. This did not prevent a cordial relation between the two men. But probably Emerson was troubled at the failure of his efforts to bring Hawthorne into an equally friendly relation with others. It was his custom to receive his friends on Sunday evenings, but on such occasions Hawthorne was apt to sit apart, taciturn and "unclubbable." He thought there seemed to be something "feminine" about the mind of this robust and grand man, who was so inexplicably shy. Emerson, furthermore, had never known poverty, and probably knew not, until later, the extent to which Hawthorne's life was overshadowed by it. Finally, let it be added, Emerson was a public teacher who, without seeking it, had been burdened with responsibility by the young who looked to him for guidance. He held health—spiritual and physical—above all treasures, and, was chary of speaking with admiration of books which had not that bloom on them,—all the more if they were fascinating. Emerson realized perfectly the truth of what Hawthorne says of the "giddiness" caused in some minds by his new wine. He felt deeply some of the tragical results, such as that suicide of Miss Hunt whose body, drawn by Hawthorne and others from Concord River, is described so painfully in "The Blithedale Romance." It was generally believed that this maiden had found an unendurable discord between her transcendental ideals and her condition of poverty.<sup>1</sup> In short, Emerson feared

<sup>1</sup> This, however, was denied by her cousins, with whom the present writer boarded for a summer, and one of whom in the end drowned herself in the same river!

everything morbid, everything superstitious, insomuch that I suspect he did not get far enough in Hawthorne's books to find what a ruddy heart was masquerading in that sombre Salem raiment.

But when Emerson came, "with a sunbeam in his face," Hawthorne's evening star turned to a morning star. The two men walked in the woods, and bathed in Walden Water, and bathed in the beauty of nature. Together they mourned over the uncelestial railroad to Boston, begun in 1843 (the year in which Hawthorne's "Celestial Railroad" appeared), which, says Emerson in a letter, "may unseat us all, and drive us into new solitudes." This occurs in a letter to his friend George Stearns Wheeler (then, April 30, 1843, in Rome) communicated to *The Manchester Guardian* (Dec. 3, 1889) by Alexander Ireland:

"Hawthorne," writes Emerson further, "remains in his seat, and writes very actively for all the magazines. . . . Nature is resolved to make a stand against the market, which has grown so usurping and omnipotent. Everything shall not go to market; so she makes shy men, cloistered maids, and angels in lone places. Brook Farm is an experiment of another kind, where a hotbed culture is applied, and carried to its extreme. I learn from all quarters that a great deal of action and courage has been shown there, and my friend Hawthorne almost regrets that he has not remained there, to see the unfolding and issue of so much bold life. He should have stayed to be its historian. My friend Mr. Bradford writes me from Brook Farm that he has formed several new friendships with old friends, such new grounds of character have been formed."

On March 3, 1844, a child was born in the Old Manse—Una. To a congratulation from his friend



Hillard (author of "Six Months in Italy") Hawthorne replies :

"I thank you for your kind and warm congratulations on the advent of our little Una—a name which I wish you were entirely pleased with, as I think you will be by and by. Perhaps the first impression may not be altogether agreeable ; for the name has never before been warmed with human life, and therefore may not seem appropriate to real flesh and blood. But for us, our child has already given it a natural warmth ; and when she has worn it through her lifetime, and perhaps transmitted it to descendants of her own, the beautiful name will have become naturalized on earth ;—whereby we shall have done a good deed in bringing it out of the realm of Faery. I do not agree with you that poetry ought not to be brought into common life. If flowers of Eden can be made to grow among my cabbages and squashes, it will please me so much the better ; those excellent vegetables will be just as good to eat, and the flower no less delightful to see and smell. After all, I like the name, not so much from any association with Spenser's heroine, as for its simple self—it is as simple as a name can be—as simple as a breath—it is merely inhaling a breath into one's heart, and emitting it again, and the name is spoken.

"I find it a very sober and serious kind of happiness that springs from the birth of a child. It ought not to come too early in a man's life—not till he has fully enjoyed his youth—for methinks the spirit can never be thoroughly gay and careless again, after this great event. We gain infinitely by the exchange ; but we do give up something nevertheless. As for myself, who have been a trifle preposterously long, I find it necessary to come out of my cloud-region, and allow myself to be woven into the sombre texture of humanity. There is no escaping it any longer. I have business on earth now, and must look about me for the means of doing it.

"It will never do for me to continue merely a writer of stories for the magazines—the most unprofitable business in the world ; and moreover, even if there were ever so great a demand for my productions, I could not spend more than a third of my time in this sort of composition. It requires a continual freshness of mind, else a deterioration in the article will quickly be perceptible. If I

am to support myself by literature, it must be by what is called drudgery, but which is incomparably less irksome, as a business, than imaginative writing—by translation, concocting of school-books, newspaper scribbling, &c. If we have a democratic administration next year, I shall again favour Uncle Sam with my services, though I hope in some less disagreeable shape than formerly.

“I sent an article to Graham some months ago, and he wrote to me, accepting it with ‘a great deal of pleasure,’ &c. ; but it does not yet appear. Unless he publishes it next month, I shall reclaim it, having occasion for it elsewhere. God keep me from ever being really a writer for bread! If I alone was concerned I had rather starve; but in that case poor little Una would have to take refuge in the alms-house—which here in Concord is a most gloomy old mansion. Her ‘angel face’ would hardly make a sunshine there. You must come and see little Una, and the rest of us, as soon as the railroad is opened. People of experience in babies say she is going to be pretty—which I devoutly believe, though the tokens are hidden from my eyes. At all events she is a remarkably strong and healthy child, free from all troubles and torments such as Nature generally provides for poor little babies. She seldom cries except for hunger—her alimentiveness being enormously developed. She has already smiled once, on the sixteenth morning of her existence. I was inclined to attribute it to wind, which sometimes produces a sardonic grin; but her mother, who was the sole witness of the phenomenon, persists that it was a veritable smile out of the child’s mouth and eyes. I hope to see you in Boston early in next month. Give our regards to Mrs. Hillard. We long to show her our baby. I am glad of Longfellow’s anticipated happiness. It is a pity that any mortal should go out of life without experiencing what gives life its reality; and, next to a child on earth, it is good to have a child in Heaven.

“Your friend,

“NATH. HAWTHORNE.”

The last sentence alludes to his friend Hillard’s recent loss of an only child.

For little Una, a huge cat was in due time procured, and of course named Lion; but the real lion she rode

on was her broad-shouldered father. It was, however, she who presently carried him from his Concord paradise. A family cannot live on Old Manse mosses or roses, or even its romances, alone. Something must be done. A democratic administration has come—that of Polk—and Hawthorne's friends lose no time in looking after his interests. "Everything now seems to be wearing out all at once," writes Mrs. Hawthorne to her mother (May, 1845). "Had my husband been dealt justly by in the matter of emoluments, there would not have been even this shadow upon the blessedness of our condition. But Horatio Bridge and Franklin Pierce came yesterday, and gave us solid hope. . . . Mr. Hawthorne was in the shed, hewing wood. Mr. Bridge caught a glimpse of him, and began a sort of waltz towards him. Mr. Pierce followed; and when they reappeared, Mr. Pierce's arm was encircling my husband's old blue frock. How his friends do love him!" O'Sullivan, of the collapsed *Democratic Review* (he was Una's godfather), writes: "Something satisfactory *shall be done* for you." It was not poverty but debt that was worrying Hawthorne, who, in all pecuniary matters, was always most scrupulous. "It is wholly new to him to be in debt," writes Mrs. Hawthorne to her mother; "and he cannot 'whistle for it,' as Mr. Emerson advised him to do, telling him that everybody was in debt, and that they were all worse than he was. His soul is too fresh with Heaven to take the world's point of view about anything."

"Sleeping or waking, we hear not the airy footsteps of the strange things that almost happen." So wrote Hawthorne in his exquisite fable, "David Swan." As

many different possible destinies now hovered around Hawthorne as about the slumbering young David. A naval post, a place in the Legation at China, Consulates in various regions of the world, were proposed for him. But, as his sister wrote long before, "by some fatality we all seemed to be brought back to Salem, in spite of our intentions and even resolutions." It was for Salem Custom House that Hawthorne, after nearly four years at the Old Manse, parted from its roses along with their thorns, but taking its mosses for an unfading life.

## CHAPTER VIII.

HAWTHORNE was appointed Surveyor of Customs at Salem in March, 1846. The salary was only £240; but the debts were paid off, and, as they made one household with his mother and sister, the combined means were sufficient for physical comfort. The drawback was, that the author was without a study.

Though Hawthorne had a certain love for his native town, he did not like it. In 1846 it was a picturesque elm-embowered old village, hardly discoverable in the Salem of to-day, with its admirable museum and other institutions, and its atmosphere of culture. Yet, as Mr. Underwood has pointed out, in an excellent article on Hawthorne (*Good Words*, Oct., 1887), it was especially suited to nourish his genius. People from every clime moved about its port, and there were steady importations of sea-legends, tales of slavers and pirates, from which the boy Hawthorne had once levied tribute where the man must levy on more prosaic stuff. The Salem boys still kindled fifth-of-November fires on Gallows Hill, as their fathers did, without dreaming of Guy Fawkes; Whitsuntide survived under disguise of the gubernatorial Election Festival; there were haunted houses and gabled

houses, and in them the scanty old libraries of the colonists ; nay, even the old costumes were sometimes visible in the streets. Absorbed, however, in less interesting " Customs," Hawthorne felt that he had passed from happy though ill-fed freedom in Concord to wear a collar round his neck. From that four years' felicity he came to three years' bondage ; yet the " Mosses from an Old Manse," representing the former, were of slight importance compared with the two great novels that grew in grimy Salem Custom House.

There never was a better officer. " Placid "—I quote by permission a letter of his Salem friend, Dr. Loring—" Placid, peaceful, calm, and retiring as he was in all the ordinary events of life, he was tempestuous and irresistible when roused. An attempt on the part of a rough and overbearing sea-captain to interfere with his business as an inspector of Customs in charge of his ship, was met with such a terrific uprising of spiritual and physical wrath, that the dismayed captain fled up the wharf and took refuge in the Office, inquiring, ' What in God's name have you sent on board my ship as an inspector ? ' He knew no such thing as fear ; was scrupulously honest ; was unwavering in his fidelity ; conscientious in the discharge of his duty. I have known no man more impressive, none in whom the great reposing strength seemed clad in such a robe of sweetness."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I add, in a note, as it is not in strict connection, Dr. Loring's impression of Hawthorne's personality. " His massive head sat upon a strong and muscular neck, and his chest was broad and capacious. His muscular force was great—his hand and foot large and well-made. In walking he had a firm step and a great stride, without effort. In early manhood he had abounding health, a good

The sea-captain's question was echoed in a way by all Salem—What have you sent us as an inspector? It was customary in those days for a Revenue Office to be a centre of party intrigues. Hawthorne would have nothing to do with politics, and the local democracy detested him. The democratic party in Massachusetts was then very different from what it is now. It was largely the party of rowdies. The respectable and well-to-do citizens were Whigs, and those of Salem looked askance on Hawthorne because he was a democrat. The new surveyor held aloof from the political schemings of both parties, and was cordially disliked by both. There is nothing in Hawthorne's "Note Books" or published letters about this Salem experience, but his wife's letters, published by her son, contain some significant items. Before the family had settled in Salem this son, Julian, the second child, was born in Boston, where Mrs. Hawthorne passed the summer (1846). On Nov. 17 Mrs. Hawthorne writes from Salem that they had passed an evening with Emerson at Mr. Howe's house. "*It is the first time we have spent the evening out since Una was*

digestion, a hearty enjoyment of food. His excellent physical condition gave him a placid and even temper, a cheerful spirit. He was a silent man, and often a moody man, but never irritable or morose; his organization was too grand for that. In conversation he was never controversial or authoritative, and never absorbing. In a multitude his silence was oppressive, but with a single companion his talk flowed on sensibly and quietly and full of wisdom and shrewdness. He discussed books with wonderful acuteness, sometimes with startling power, and with an unexpected verdict. He analyzed men, their characters, and motives, and capacity, with great penetration—impartially if a stranger, with the tenderest justice if a friend."

*born.*" They at first dwelt in the old family house in Herbert Street; it was not until the autumn of 1847 that they found one large enough to accommodate the families and give Hawthorne a study. It was in Mall Street, and its annual cost £40. "My husband's study will be high from all noise, and it will be to me a Paradise of Peace to think of him alone and still, yet within my reach. He has now lived in the nursery a year without a chance for one hour's uninterrupted musing, and without his desk being once opened. He—the heaven-gifted Seer—to spend his life between the Custom House and the nursery! I want him to be with me, not because he *must* be, but only when he is just in the mood for all the scenes of Babydom. In the evening he is always mine, for then he never wishes to write." "Madame Hawthorne is so uninterfering, of so much delicacy, that I shall never know she is near excepting when I wish it; and she has so much kindness and sense and spirit that she will be a great resource in emergencies."

The Peabodys—Mrs. Hawthorne's parents—no longer resided in Salem, but were engaged with their daughter Elizabeth in her transcendental book (and homœopathic) establishment in Boston. Mrs. Hawthorne visited them in June, 1848. Let the dismal surveyor's office be credited with the following, from a letter to the absent wife, there dated, June 19th :

"Tell my little daughter Una that her dolly, since her departure, has been blossoming like a rose—such an intense bloom, indeed, that I rather suspected her of making free with a brandy-bottle. On taxing her with it, however, she showed no signs of guilt or



confusion, and I trust it was merely owing to the hot weather. The colour has now subsided into quite a moderate tint, and she looks splendidly at a proper distance, though, on close inspection, her skin appears rather coarse. She has contracted an unfortunate habit of squinting, and her mouth, I am sorry to say, is somewhat askew. I shall take her to task on these matters, and hope to produce a reformation. Should I fail, thou must take her in hand. Give Una a kiss, and tell her I love her dearly."

The Salem of to-day is, no doubt, sufficiently ashamed of the way in which Hawthorne was treated by the Salem of forty years ago. He had already been recognized by the finest minds in the country, but now, returning to his native town, it had no pride in him. There were exceptions, no doubt, but Salem, as a town, supplied him no shield against his enemies. For the feeling of the vulgar partizans, to whose assembly his honour could not be united, amounted to enmity. This was not, perhaps, or not universally, the feeling in the Custom House itself. Probably not one of his fellow-officials, he supposes, had ever read a word of his writings; but they no doubt felt his superiority and knew his magnanimity. Yet among them he appears to have found only two with whom he could be on anything like personal terms. One was the head clerk, "Zach. Burchmore," easily identified as the man described, though unnamed, in the introduction to "The Scarlet Letter." "He was, indeed, the Custom House in himself;" and the observation of his character gave Hawthorne "a new idea of talent." "Here, in a word—and it is a rare instance in my life—I had met with a person thoroughly adapted to the situation which he held." Burchmore was a man of humour, too. From my friend Mr. Williamson I have a note of his: "SALEM,

*Jan. 27, 1848.* For value received I promise to pay Nathaniel Hawthorne four pence in sixty years.—Z. BURCHMORE." Over the face of this is written: "Pay the within to the Wandering Jew, Nath'l Hawthorne." The other official who interested Hawthorne was a sort of Socrates-in-the-rough, named Pike, of whom Hawthorne said to President Pierce, "there is an old fellow at Salem who has more brains than either of us." Neither Burchmore nor Pike ever read a line of Hawthorne's, but they were fascinated by him, and an amusing feud arose from their jealousy of each other's place in his regard.

It is pleasant to associate that grim Custom House with even one laugh. For it was a dismal time. In those days even the pittance paid to Customs Surveyors by the Treasury was delayed, if the receipts fell off, and for this stunted income odious work was sometimes required. Hawthorne, for instance, was required by the Treasury to dismiss two temporary inspectors; and, despite his efforts to save them by merely suspending them until business might justify their return, they became his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It appears that there was some treachery in this business, and that some subordinate used the suspension to get a partizan contribution from the men as a means of restoration. This was actually charged against Hawthorne, proving how little he was known in Salem. A painful circumstance is that among his opponents should have been Charles W. Upham, historian of "Salem Witchcraft"—the man of all others who should have been a friend to his brother author. Mr. Upham was not, as Hawthorne supposed, prime mover in the affair; his fault was in lending his ear to the accusations of others. Hawthorne, it should be said, had some years before been annoyed by Mr. Upham's mentioning in Salem the poverty of the Hawthornes in Concord, and possibly had conceived

In November, 1848, the Whig candidate, General Zachary Taylor, was elected to the presidency, and there was a clamour for Hawthorne's official head. In this the Whigs and Democrats combined, though it would appear that afterwards, when it was too late, there was a reaction. But the story is told by Hawthorne himself in his letters to George S. Hillard (*Athenæum*, August 10 and 17, 1889). Dr. John S. H. Fogg, of Boston, the owner of these letters, enables me to supply a passage omitted from the first letter, as printed in the *Athenæum* :

“*March 5, 1849.*

“I am informed that there is to be a strong effort among the politicians here to remove me from office, and that my successor is already marked out. I do not think that this ought to be done; for I was not appointed to office as a reward for political services, nor have I acted as a politician since. A large portion of the local democratic party look coldly on me for not having used the influence of my position to obtain the removal of Whigs—which I might have done, but which I in no case did. Neither was my appointment made at the expense of a Whig; for my predecessor was appointed by Tyler in his latter days, and called himself a Democrat. Nor can any charge of inattention to duty, or other official misconduct, be brought against me; or, if so, I could easily refute it. There is, therefore, no ground for disturbing me, except on the most truculent party system. All this, however, will be of little avail with the Hangwhangers—the vote-distributors—the Jack Cades who assume to decide upon these matters, after a political triumph; and as to

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a dislike for him. It should be added that the personal charge against Hawthorne was of “loafing round with hard drinkers.” His own head was proof against stimulants, but this was not the case with all of those with whom he associated. No charge of immorality was ever made against Hawthorne.

any literary claims of mine, they would not weigh a feather, nor be thought worth weighing at all. But it seems to me that an inoffensive man of letters, having obtained a pitiful little office, on no other plea than his pitiful little literature, ought not to be left to the mercy of these thick-skulled and no-hearted ruffians. It is for this that I now write to you. There are men in Boston—Mr. Rufus Choate, for instance—whose favourable influence with the administration would make it impossible to remove me, and whose support and sympathy might fairly be obtained in my behalf—not on the ground that I am a very good writer, but because I gained my position, such as it is, by my literary character, and have done nothing to forfeit that tenure. I do not think you can have any objection to bringing this matter under the consideration of such men; but if you do object, I am sure it will be for some good reason, and therefore beg you not to stir in it. I do not want any great fuss to be made: the whole thing is not worth it: but I should like to have the Administration enlightened by a few such testimonials as would take my name out of the list of ordinary office-holders, and at least prevent any hasty action. I think, too, that the letters (if you obtain any) had better contain no allusion to the proposed attack on me, as it may possibly fall through of itself. Certainly the general feeling here in Salem would be in my favour; but I have seen too much of the modes of political action to lay any great stress on that.

“Be pleased on no account to mention this matter to any Salem man, however friendly to me he may profess himself. If any movement on my part were heard of, it would precipitate their assault.

“So much for business. I do not let myself be disturbed by these things, but employ my leisure hours in writing, and go on as quietly as ever. I see that Longfellow has written a prose tale. How indefatigable he is! and how adventurous! Well he may be, for he never fails.”

“June 8, 1849.

“I am turned out of office!

“There is no use in lamentation. It now remains to consider what I shall do next. The emoluments of the office have been so moderate that I have not been able to do anything more than support my family, and pay some few debts that I had contracted.

If you could do anything in the way of procuring me some stated literary employment, in connection with a newspaper, or as corrector of the press to some printing establishment, &c., it could not come at a better time. Perhaps Epes Sargent, who is a friend of mine, would know of something. I shall not stand upon my dignity; that must take care of itself. Perhaps there may be some subordinate office connected with the Boston Athenæum [Library]. Do not think anything too humble to be mentioned to me.

"I wrote to Longfellow the other day that I would dine with him on his next invitation, and that you would come too. I should like soon to meet you and him.

"The intelligence has just reached me, and Sophia has not yet heard it. She will bear it like a woman—that is to say, better than a man."

"SALEM, June 12, 1849.

"I have just received your letter. It makes me sick at heart to think of making any effort to retain this office. I trust that God means to put me in some other position; and I care not how hard or how humble it may be. Nevertheless, I answer your questions as well as I can.

"I am accused, you tell me, of writing political articles for a democratic paper here—the *Salem Advertiser*. My contributions to that paper have been two theatrical criticisms, a notice of a ball at Ballard Vale, a notice of Longfellow's 'Evangeline,' and perhaps half a dozen other books. Never one word of politics. Any one of the articles would have been perfectly proper for a Whig paper, and indeed most of them were copied into Whig papers elsewhere. You know and the public knows what my contributions to *The Democratic Review* have been. They are all published in one or another of my volumes—all, with a single exception. That is a brief sketch of the life of my early and very dear friend Cilley, written shortly after his death, at the request of the editor. I have not read it for years; but I am willing to refer to it as a proof of what sort of a politician I am. Written in the very midst of my grief, and when every other man in the nation, on both sides, was at fever-heat, it is, though very sad, as calm as though it had been written a hundred years after the event; and so far as I recollect it, it might as well have been written by a Whig as a Democrat. Look

at it, and see. It cannot be called a political article; and, with that single exception, I have never, in all my life, written one word that had reference to politics.

“As to my political action, I have voted, since I have been in office, twice. I have listened to a portion of a political address by Mr. Rantoul, and to a portion of another by Caleb Cushing. I suffer under considerable odium in the view of my own party for having taken no part whatever. All my official conduct has been under the supervision and sanction of Colonel Miller, a Whig, the Deputy Collector, and now Collector of the port. He is now in Washington. I refer to him. If any definite charges were before me, I would answer them. As it is, I have no more to say—and do not care to have said what I have.

“I repeat, that it makes me sick to think of attempting to recover this office. Neither have I any idea that it can be recovered. There is no disposition to do me justice. The Whigs know that the charges are false. But, without intending it, they are doing me a higher justice than my best friends. I have come to feel that it is not good for me to be here. I am in a lower moral state than I have been—a duller intellectual one. So let me go; and, under God’s providence, I shall arrive at something better.

It seems probable, from the foregoing letter, that the ghost of poor Cilley had once more risen in Hawthorne’s path, and his praise of that democratic statesman been recalled by a Whig administration, as his condemnation of an accessory to the duel-murder had forfeited the favour of a democratic administration. If this be so, the ghost of Cilley really did him good service this time. Hawthorne’s removal from the Custom House was the first entrance on a career worthy of him. His wife having greeted the tidings as a release, Hawthorne at once realized how great a burden had been lifted. There was a good deal of resentment of this removal among men who wielded sharp pens. President Taylor had

been elected by voters from both parties, on account of his military services, and had proclaimed, "I am a Whig, but not an ultra Whig." But official democratic heads fell all the same, and Hawthorne's case presented an extreme application of the "spoils system." Possibly his office might have been restored had he not refused to accede to it. He tried to utilize all the sentiment elicited for himself for the restoration of Burchmore. This officer, bred in the Custom House, had been ruthlessly removed, and Hawthorne wrote letter after letter to testify the importance of Burchmore's services to the public business at Salem.<sup>1</sup>

What is said, in the foregoing statement, of Hawthorne's relations with Salem, is based on his letters, and his introduction to "The Scarlet Letter," though not without misgivings, based on my personal recollections of Salem's hospitable homes, that there must be another side, not visible to the author in his transient vale of humiliation. I therefore submitted the matter to my

<sup>1</sup> It was all of no avail, and the poor head clerk, who had given Hawthorne "a new idea of talent," disappears in some small shop in Salem. Mr. Williamson has several letters to Burchmore afterwards written by Hawthorne. In one (May 13, 1850) Hawthorne, now in Boston, says, "I can't come to Salem, and, to say the truth, would rather go to any other place in the known world." From Lenox (April 7, 1851), he writes: "Do you deal in cigars? If you meet with any good ones, at a reasonable rate, I should like to have you reserve a quarter of a thousand for me; and I will call for them when I come to Boston." From Concord (July, 1852): "Is there any first-rate brandy to be had? I shall want a gallon or two before the liquor law goes into operation." So his patronage went all the way to Salem for the sake of this humiliated clerk.

friend Dr. Loring, a friend of both Salem and Hawthorne, and am permitted to quote his reply :

“Salem did not ‘treat its illustrious son’ at all, because he gave it no opportunity. He was a recluse there always. In early life he was part of the time in Maine, part of the time in college, and the rest of the time an unknown and apparently idle young man. He wrote stories and published them in magazines, but nobody knew who wrote them; and Elizabeth Peabody told me that for a long time it was supposed they were written by a woman—and that not long before the ‘Twice-told Tales’ came out. She first discovered that they were written in Salem, and then, after long search, that they were written by one Hawthorne. It was very difficult for the Peabodys to make his acquaintance. At last their culture and intellectual capacity drew him out, and he began to call at their house. To the Peabody family he confined his social attentions in Salem. My first wife, a cousin of Mrs. Hawthorne, used often to urge Sophia to bring him to her house, but in vain. Salem was full of cultivated and brilliant people at that time, but Hawthorne could not be induced to visit them. He was really too shy for such social intercourse; his brain was too busy with its creations; and he had no gift whatever for ordinary conversation. His life had been too long secluded. His daily official associates [when he had returned there after marriage] were a group of men, all of whom had remarkable characteristics, not of the best many times, but original, strong, highly-flavoured, defiant democrats, with whom he was officially connected, who made no appeal to him,



but responded to the uncultivated side of his nature, and to whose defects he was blind on account of their originality. If they were given to excesses, as perhaps one or two of them were, he took no part with them in that side of their lives. How often it happens that a hard, rough, racy, unpolished, strong, and vigorous person furnishes a sort of relief to the refined and cultivated, as the eye accustomed to the artistic beauties of the garden and the gallery, and to the refinements of a tasteful home, will take delight in the rudeness of a homely cottage on a rough and rugged mountain side! Hawthorne was thrown into such a group in the Custom House, and he associated with them while he was not of them. Ever in reserve, he was an uneventful person—his great charm consisting in his manifest appreciation of everything about him. He was most winning in his own home and in the houses of his friends. His entertainments of me at Concord were charming, but there is no event about them. He should be judged by his intimacy with the Peabodys, and by his home made most tasteful and refined by his brilliant wife, where he spent all his leisure hours, and to which he was always devoted."

At the time when Hawthorne's fortunes seemed to reach their lowest depth, he found himself, as it were, rich. In the first place his wife disclosed a hundred and fifty golden dollars which, without his knowledge, she had saved up for just this rainy day. Another hundred came unexpectedly from O'Sullivan—saved from wreck of *The Democratic Review*. And how unsuspectedly rich this ostracized Salemite was in friends a little way

off was presently revealed by a substantial cheque and a noble letter (Jan. 17, 1850) from Hillard :

“It occurred to me,” so it ran, “and some other of your friends that, in consideration of the events of the last year, you might at this time be in need of a little pecuniary aid. I have therefore collected, from some of those who admire your genius and respect your character, the enclosed sum of money, which I send you with my warmest wishes for your health and happiness. I know the sensitive edge of your temperament ; but do not speak or think of obligation. It is only paying, in a very imperfect measure, the debt we owe you for what you have done for American literature. Could you know the readiness with which every one to whom I applied contributed to this little offering, and could you have heard the warm expressions with which some accompanied their gift, you would have felt that the bread you had cast on the waters had indeed come back to you. Let no shadow of despondency, my dear friend, steal over you. Your friends do not and will not forget you. You shall be protected against ‘eating cares,’ which, I take it, mean cares lest we should not have enough to eat.”

And here is the touching reply :

“SALEM, *Jan.* 30, 1850.

“I read your letter in the vestibule of the Post Office ; and it drew—what my troubles never have--the water to my eyes ; so that I was glad of the sharply cold west wind that blew into them as I came homeward, and gave them an excuse for being red and bleared.

“There was much that was very sweet—and something too that was very bitter—mingled with that same moisture. It is sweet to be remembered and cared for by one’s friends—some of whom know me for what I am, while others, perhaps, know me only through a generous faith—sweet to think that they deem me worth upholding in my poor work through life. And it is bitter, nevertheless, to need their support. It is something else besides pride that teaches me that ill-success in life is really and justly a matter of shame. I am ashamed of it, and I ought to be. The fault of a failure is

attributable—in a great degree at least—to the man who fails. I should apply this truth in judging of other men ; and it behoves me not to shun its point or edge in taking it home to my *own* heart. Nobody has a right to live in the world unless he be strong and able, and applies his ability to good purpose.

“The money, dear Hillard, will smooth my path for a long time to come. The only way in which a man can retain his self-respect, while availing himself of the generosity of his friends, is by making it an incitement to his utmost exertions, so that he may not need their help again. I shall look upon it so—nor will I shun any drudgery that my hand shall find to do, if thereby I may win bread.”

Finally, we may anticipate a few years, and find a happy end to this chapter in the subjoined letter from the Liverpool consulate :

“LIVERPOOL, *Dec. 9, 1853.*

“DEAR HILLARD,—I herewith send you a draft on Ticknor for the sum (with interest included) which was so kindly given me by unknown friends, through you, about four years ago.

“I have always hoped and intended to do this, from the first moment when I made up my mind to accept the money. It would not have been right to speak of this purpose before it was in my power to accomplish it ; but it has never been out of my mind for a single day, nor hardly, I think, for a single working hour. I am most happy that this loan (as I may fairly call it, at this moment) can now be repaid without the risk on my part of leaving my wife and children utterly destitute. I should have done it sooner ; but I felt that it would be selfish to purchase the great satisfaction for myself, at any fresh risk to them. We are not rich, nor are we ever likely to be ; but the miserable pinch is over.

“The friends who were so generous to me must not suppose that I have not felt deeply grateful, nor that my delight at relieving myself from this pecuniary obligation is of any ungracious kind. I have been grateful all along, and am more so now than ever. This act of kindness did me an unspeakable amount of good ; for it came when I most needed to be assured that anybody thought it worth

while to keep me from sinking. And it did me even greater good than this, in making me sensible of the need of sterner efforts than my former ones, in order to establish a right for myself to live and be comfortable. For it is my creed (and was so even at that wretched time) that a man has no claim upon his fellow-creatures, beyond bread and water, and a grave, unless he can win it by his own strength or skill. But so much the kinder were those unknown friends whom I thank again with all my heart."

So did the last cloud of a long dismal day float into light.

## CHAPTER IX.

**D**URING the first year of his Salem surveyorship, as we have seen, Hawthorne had not even a study. In November, 1847, Mrs. Hawthorne writes, "My husband began retiring to his study on the 1st of November, and writes every afternoon." The year following was one of miserable annoyances, yet in it grew two at least of those mystical "tales" that may rather be called poems. One of these is "The Snow Image." In early life I knew a brilliant lady in Washington who told me that she measured her guests by their estimates of that fable, and I did not wonder when she afterwards put forth poetic wings (under the initials "H. H."). The other tale—or poem—to which I refer is "The Great Stone Face." This seems to have found its way into the hands of the poet Whittier, and was sent by him to Dr. Bailey, editor of *The National Era* (Washington), in which paper it appeared, Jan. 24, 1850. It is rather curious, remembering Hawthorne's association with the party allied with slavery, that this tale should appear in the journal which brought out "Uncle Tom's Cabin." "Main Street" was also written in the same year, and appeared in Elizabeth Peabody's volume of "Æsthetic Papers." There was a

large demand for Hawthorne's pen, but he was apt to consider his tales unfinished, and reluctant to print them. Mr. Williamson lends me a letter written by him from Salem (Dec. 14, 1848) to C. W. Webber, New York, referring to some enterprise of which I can find nothing further. The opening sentence points, I think, to "Ethan Brand : a Chapter from an Abortive Romance," which is indeed fragmentary :<sup>1</sup>

"At last," he says, "by main strength, I have wrenched and torn an idea out of my miserable brain ; or rather, the fragment of an idea, like a tooth ill-drawn, and leaving the roots to torture me. I shall send it to you by express to-day or to-morrow. Perhaps you will not like it ; if so, make no ceremony about rejecting it. I am as tractable an author as you ever knew, so far as putting my articles into the fire goes ; though I cannot abide alterations or omissions.

"I am ashamed, as a Yankee, and surveyor of the revenue, to say that I had not paid proper consideration to the terms of payment mentioned in two of your letters. I concluded your first statement to be as liberal as circumstances would allow, and should still think so if you did not yourself tell me to the contrary.

"When shall you want another article ? Now that the spell is broken, I hope to get into a regular train of scribbling ; perhaps not, however, for I have many impediments to struggle against.

"Pray continue to write freely to me. I feel a real interest in the success of your enterprise."

I was told by Mrs. Hawthorne's sister, Elizabeth Peabody, that when, on that wintry day, Hawthorne returned so early from the Custom House, and with pale lips said to his wife, "I am turned out of office," she cheerily

<sup>1</sup> But this first appeared, I believe, in *The Dollar Magazine*, early in 1851, and entitled "The Unpardonable Sin."

replied, "Very well! now you can write your book!" While Hawthorne's eyes were feasting on the unsuspected little pile of gold she had saved, the wife was in his study, where his table was arranged, and a fire soon blazing. The great man's enemies, little dreaming what triumph lay in his seeming defeat, were speedily forgotten; in their places stood fair phantoms summoned for new life from a past whose cruelties the enemies helped him to realize.

It was perfectly understood by Hawthorne what book his wife meant. "The Scarlet Letter" had long been taking shape in him. Many years before he found in the records of Boston mention of a punishment which Mr. Lathrop now discovers in an enactment of Plymouth Colony, in 1658: "It is enacted by the Court and the Authoritie thereof that whosoever shall committ Adultery shall be severly Punished by whipping two several times viz: once whiles the Court is in being att which they are convicted of the fact, and the second time as the Court shall order, and likewise to were two Capital letters viz.: A D cut out in cloth and sewed on their vpermost garments on their arme or backe; and if at any time they shal bee taken without said letters, whiles they are in the Gov'ment soe worne, to be forthwith Taken and publicly whipt." When first discovered the record had suggested to Hawthorne another view, as we find in the earlier tale, "Endicott and the Red Cross": "Sporting with her infamy, the lost and desperate creature had embroidered the fatal token in scarlet cloth, with golden thread and the nicest art of needlework." But some friend of the author said, "We shall hear of that letter

again." Perhaps he had found Hawthorne reflecting that some other interpretation might be put on the woman's careful embroidery of her scarlet brand.

When Hawthorne had advanced towards the middle of the novel an unexpected calamity came upon him—the death of his mother, to whom he was tenderly attached. Afterwards he was taken ill himself, and just as the money had given out. He began to despond about the novel too; he considered that, after all, it was only another tale such as he had previously "scribbled," and, as a note in the work shows, had actually contemplated its publication as one of another volume of *Tales*. The completion of "The Scarlet Letter" is no doubt partly due to the late James T. Fields, who, with the publisher's shrewdness, combined the insight of a literary man. Among Mr. Fields' "Yesterdays with Authors," none shines more brightly than that which carried him to Salem, in the winter of 1849, and up into the study, where he found Hawthorne hovering over a stove. "Now," cried Fields, "it is time for you to publish; for I know during these years in Salem you must have got something ready for the press." "Nonsense," says Hawthorne; "what heart had I to write anything when my publishers have been so many years trying to sell a small edition of the 'Twice-told Tales'?" And to further pressure, "Who," he asks, "would risk publishing a book from me, the most unpopular writer in America?" "I would," returns Fields, who, as he rises to go, catches sight of some drawers and affirms positively that they contain stories. Hawthorne shakes his head, but, when Fields is on his way downstairs, follows him with a roll



of manuscript. "As you have found me out, take what I have written, and tell me if it is good for anything." Before Fields slept that night he had read the germ of "The Scarlet Letter," and had written to Hawthorne his admiration of it. He had said in their interview that he would begin with an edition of 2,000 copies of anything Hawthorne might write; but this novel would require 5,000 at once. Hawthorne took courage, and by February 3rd had completed the story. He read the conclusion to his wife, and "it broke her heart and sent her to bed with a grievous headache." Yet, despite this "triumphant success," he could not believe that any writing of his would touch the public heart. "My dear Fields," he writes (the letter, lent me by Mr. Williamson, is dated March 7, 1850): "I pray Heaven the book may be a quarter part as successful as you prophesy. Nevertheless, I don't expect even this small modicum of luck. It is not in my cards." But the prophecy was more than fulfilled. The first edition (5,000 copies) was at once sold, and the reprint in England was nearly as successful—for its publishers.

Among the minor results of the splendid success of "The Scarlet Letter," it may be mentioned that Salem waked up to a perception that it had been entertaining (or the reverse) a great man unawares. Not that it had any reason to think him an angel, for in his introduction Hawthorne had painted portraits of some of those by whom he had been surrounded, without any particular tenderness, though certainly without vindictiveness. Hawthorne was well aware of the echoes that would come from Salem if his book should be read there.

“Touching the advance sheets for the *Literary World*,” he writes Fields, in this letter of March 7th, “I think it would be well to give them; but I hesitate about that particular passage. I shall catch it pretty smartly from my ill-wishers here in Salem, on the score of this old Inspector; and though I care little for that, yet it may be as well not to bring his character out in the *alto rilievo* of a preliminary extract. How would it do to take the character of General Miller? I don’t think it would be advisable to give anything from the story itself, because I know of no passage that would not throw too much light on the plot of the book. The whole introduction might be sent to Duyckinck with a veto only on that one passage.”

So the book came out in its integrity. The old Inspector was dead, and Hawthorne may not have known that he had left two daughters. He is unable to resist the temptation to put him into a picture of the Customs interior. There was a certain public justice, perhaps, in portraying a specimen of the people protected by all administrations while the competent were decapitated. It is done with as full freedom from personal animosity as ever animated Teniers in painting a merry boor in his beer-house. Hawthorne plainly prizes his model. Yet I cannot help feeling that the pages on the Inspector fall beneath Hawthorne’s art, and that a humorous sentence or two would have sufficed. With one or two duly marked exceptions, however, it is clear that the officials of the Custom House had by no means shown themselves in possession of such competency or character as to deserve that any veil should be left over the kind of institution produced in every part of the country by the system of using the Civil Service to reward party service. This Introduction was the earliest exposure of the vicious

“spoils” system with which Civil Service reformers—under the lead of Hawthorne’s friend, George W. Curtis—are now occupied; but which, as I think, they will find to be rooted as deeply as the birthmark in one of our author’s tales. When it disappears the presidential monarchy will disappear with it.

It was a terrible sentence that Salem, which supplied him no defender, now heard from the man whom it presently recognized as its greatest son—the flower of all its history. “My good townspeople will not much regret me; for, though it has been as dear an object as any, in my literary efforts, to be of some importance in their eyes, and to win myself a pleasant memory in this abode and burial-place of so many of my forefathers, there has never been, for me, the genial atmosphere which a literary man requires, in order to ripen the best harvest of his mind. I shall do better amongst other faces; and these familiar ones, it need hardly be said, will do just as well without me. It may be, however—oh, transporting and triumphant thought!—that the great-grandchildren of the present race may sometimes think kindly of the scribbler of bygone days, when the antiquary of days to come, among the sites memorable in the town’s history, shall point out the locality of THE TOWN PUMP!”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “The site of my town pump,” writes Hawthorne in 1858, “so plainly indicated in the sketch itself, has already been mistaken in the City council and in the public prints.” His pride in this old sketch of his is amusing; it is the only one he ever gloried in. He remembers it beside Boccaccio’s well at Arezzo. “A thousand and a thousand people had pumped there, merely to water oxen or fill their tea-kettles, but when once I grasped the handle, a rill gushed

Not merely the Town Pump, but every object referred to in Hawthorne's tales, was treasured by those who read this pathetic passage—recognition not being left even to their children. Before Hawthorne died three houses in his native town were competing for the honour of being his "House of the Seven Gables." Nay, there were hundreds who, when they read the introduction to "The Scarlet Letter," and learned that the author had been pelted with calumnies without finding a defender in his native town, would have rushed to the Mall Street house and clasped his feet. But it was too late. Hawthorne had lingered in Salem only for his mother's sake; she being dead, he had left the place for ever. (But all hard feelings died away. In 1860 Hawthorne contributed to "Weal-Reaf," printed in Salem for benefit of a Fair, a characteristic letter on a "haunted" house of the neighbourhood,—where some boys were once frightened by ghosts—in a closet they opened—which proved to be old portraits.) "The Scarlet Letter" is epical in its expression of the moral history of New England. It has been made into an opera in Europe, and dramatised in America, but if acted in Massachusetts it would produce the effect of a Passion Play. Its success was largely due to its harmony with scriptural themes which, by a sort of survival of the Leviticaest, have become part of the very

forth that meandered as far as England—as far as India—besides tasting pleasantly in every town and village of our own country. I like to think of this, so long after I did it, and so far from home, and am not without hopes of some kindly local remembrance on that score." The sketch was published in London (1857) as a temperance tract.

tissues of the New England man. Hester Prynne's scarlet mark is the brand of Cain over again. As one may hear on any Sunday, from pulpit expounders of the fratricide's brand, Hester's mark "had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity;" and what other interpretation would the sound theologian put on the protection of Cain's life by his mark than that suggested by Hester's husband: "Even if I imagine a scheme of vengeance, what could I do better for my object than to let thee live, so that this burning shame may still blaze upon thy bosom?"<sup>1</sup> Touching thus chords which had vibrated in every breast for centuries, "The Scarlet Letter" would have proved effective and successful even had it been less artistic. But how fine is its art appears in the pretty general belief that Hawthorne actually found an embroidered letter in the Salem Custom House. How else could he offer to show it to any one who might desire to see this "most curious relic"? The letter and the old MS., which he contemplates depositing with the Essex Historical Society, are, of course, purely fictitious. The book is also daring in its disregard of the ethical survivals. This is the more remarkable because Hawthorne was himself a purist with regard to sexual morality. He once told the present writer that he did not meet a certain author in London because of her irregular marriage. In re-reading "The Scarlet Letter," however, I have had

<sup>1</sup> It is notable that another novel, which has a place beside "The Scarlet Letter," as an American classic work, is also a scriptural travesty—"Elsie Venner," in which the hereditary Fall, through the serpent, is rationalized.

(George  
Sawyer)

misgivings that I may have misunderstood him, for he has here made one such woman into the only noble, pure, and lovable character in his book. Beside stolid Respectability, and Priestcraft cruel and cowardly, she shines like a star. Nor is her exaltation that of a penitent Magdalen. "What we did had a consecration of its own," she says to her reverend lover, with whom she would fain seek to recover happiness in a distant land. And finally the lives of herself and her daughter, instead of illustrating retributive "justice," end happily. Hawthorne may not have intended any such general impression as that just given; indeed, there are sentences thrown in here and there which look as if he had become conscious, during revision, that some *caveat* was needed. It appears to me plain that Hawthorne threw his intellect unreservedly into this work, that his characters were created organically, without the slightest reference to conventional estimates or religious prejudices. Perhaps, in his long absence from church, and his excursions among the so-called "come-outers" (*i.e.*, from existing society) of Brook Farm and Concord, he had even forgotten what the standards of soundness were. *The Church Review* reminded him of them sharply, and asked, "Is the French era actually begun in our literature?" The "orthodox" were particularly scandalized by a sympathetic review, in *The Massachusetts Quarterly* (edited by Theodore Parker), Sept. 1850, from the pen of Dr. George B. Loring. Mr. Lathrop finds it still necessary to insist that Hawthorne cannot be held responsible for the utterances of his characters, and points out sentences in which their moral delusions are

rebuked. But the clerical instinct told true, however confused its comments. Here was a story that did not preach. It had neither moral nor immoral object. It was a calm—almost cold—history of a situation happening amid the moral and religious conditions and institutions of New England. The events happened so, and the characters acted as they must; if the happenings and the actings are not such as might point the pulpit's moral, or adorn the Sunday-school tale, the historian cannot help it. It is largely this remorseless—though sometimes apparently reluctant—veracity which makes the story thrilling.

It is not wonderful that it should have sent Mrs. Hawthorne to bed with a grievous headache. But this may partly be because it seals up the fountain of tears. Pathetic as is the theme, there is hardly a pathetic passage in the story. It excites pity, sometimes anger, but it is against impersonal laws, moving by necessity, like glaciers. There is a masterly dissection of typical hearts, at which we seem to assist, like the students around their master in Rembrandt's picture of the dissecting-room. It would be intolerable were it vivisection; but we feel at every moment that the system out of which such a tragedy could arise is dead. Hester Prynne is its last victim, and we now see her turned by a wondering generation into a martyr.

## CHAPTER X.

AS one may infer, from the exquisite vesture in which his thoughts are dressed, Hawthorne was very dainty in æsthetic tastes. His children must have pretty names—Una, Julian, Rose—which happily suited them well. This master of mystery and gloom did not like that his wife or daughters should wear dark stuffs. He had the Hindu's sentiment, that if the women of a house are beautifully arrayed the whole house is decorated. Nevertheless, it was the wife's dream that her husband should dwell in a beautiful home. With her artistic accomplishments but little outlay was needed for this; and when, in the summer of 1850, the family, Salem dust shaken from their feet, removed to Lenox, Massachusetts, the first moneys from "The Scarlet Letter" were devoted to the decorations of the home interior. The house was small, of such deep red brick that Hawthorne called it the "Scarlet Letter," and Hester Prynne never embroidered her badge more carefully than this home was adorned. It was also adorned with friends. Lenox was then a unique place. Mrs. Sedgwick had opened there an excellent school for young ladies, and the beauty of the region—its hills, dales, lake,



woods—had attracted pleasant families, who had built there summer villas. Among the notable figures of the vicinity were Fanny Kemble, Herman Melville, and G. P. R. James. In that first summer (1850) literary men swarmed there on visits—Holmes, Lowell, Whipple, Duyckinck, Headley, Fields and his wife. Hawthorne joined in their excursions, for he did not write much in summer. Oftener he rambled with his children, and made acquaintance with the bees and humming-birds and chickens—the latter making an important part of the family. When autumn came, all these were summoned into his study and transferred by his art to the legendary garden of “The House of the Seven Gables.”

In this romance (finished January 26, 1851) we find Hawthorne intellectually enriched by severe experiences. It is founded on the traditional “curse” hurled on the Hawthorne family by the “wizard” executed by sentence of their magisterial ancestor; but whereas, in “The Scarlet Letter,” this is alluded to in a way suggestive of superstition in the author, it is here rationalized. “Under those seven gables, at which we now look up . . . through a portion of three centuries, there has been perpetual remorse of conscience, a constantly defeated hope, strife amongst kindred, various misery, a strange form of death, dark suspicion, unspeakable disgrace; all, or most of which calamity, I have the means of tracing to the old Puritan’s desire to plant and endow a family.” He can now, in his happy home, even smile at poor Hepzibah’s satisfaction in “the sombre dignity of an inherited curse.”

For the rest, I cannot see with some others any great

originality in Hawthorne's delineation of the hypocritical Judge Pyncheon. I have heard that there used to be a cruel daguerreotype of Mr. Upham, a handsome man, in a Salem shop window, and possibly this may have suggested one incident in the tale (unless the incident suggested the daguerreotype story!). But there was nothing in Mr. Upham's career resembling anything in that of Judge Pyncheon. The Judge appears to me an unrealistic stage-villain, acting "as it is written" in the legend. Nor does heroine Phœbe—charming and satisfactory as she is—seem a particularly unique creation. The miracles of the book are the gradual effort of the prisoner—so long buried alive—to recover his lost youth and happiness, and the loyal devotion of gaunt Hepzibah to this brother, even to the withdrawal of her marred visage, which he dislikes to look upon. When the late Bronson Alcott—a transcendental dreamer at Concord in Hawthorne's time—became aged and feeble-minded, he was amused with pictures, but if any wild beast appeared in these he began to weep. Long before this, Hawthorne wrote of enfeebled Clifford, looking at the organ-grinder's monkey, that "he was so shocked by his horrible ugliness, spiritual as well as physical, that he actually began to shed tears." In all the detail work of this romance the reader feels that he is receiving actual impressions and experiences.

Hawthorne was overwhelmed with letters about "The Scarlet Letter," and the "House of the Seven Gables." "I receive," he writes to his sister Louisa, "very complimentary letters from poets and prozers, and adoring ones from young ladies; and I have almost a challenge

from a gentleman who complains of me for introducing his grandfather, Judge Pyncheon. It seems there was really a Pyncheon family formerly resident in Salem, and one of them bore the title of Judge, and was a Tory at the time of the Revolution—with which facts I was entirely unacquainted. I pacified the gentleman by a letter." The real Judge Pyncheon was a worthy gentleman, and it was rather imprudent in Hawthorne to take old names from the annals of Salem, as he did also in the case of Maule.

The success of the novel was even greater than that of "The Scarlet Letter," from the publisher's point of view. Fields lustily cried, "More!" Hawthorne had grown so hopeless about his later tales that he had not even preserved copies of them, but fortunately his sisters had been more careful; by their assistance was formed the collection afterwards (1852) published under title of "The Snow Image, and other Twice-told Tales."

Meanwhile, however, he had written (1851) "A Wonder Book for Boys and Girls," which, in Frederick Warne and Co.'s "Chandos Classics," appears with a later volume "Tanglewood Tales" (1853), and under the latter title. In March, 1853 ("Am. Note Books," ii. p. 154), he speaks of his "former plan of writing one or two mythological story-books," and no doubt these stories had for some time been on his anvil. Of these works Mr. Henry James, jun., says, "I have been careful not to read them over, for I should be very sorry to risk disturbing in any degree a recollection of them that has been at rest since the appreciative period of life to which they are addressed. They seem at that period

enchancing." More adventurous than my friend, I have just read the stories again. Emerson used to insist on inviting to our picnics at Concord, "all children from six years to sixty;" and Hawthorne contemplates a similar company. When he read these stories at Tanglewood, Lenox, or at Wayside, Concord, he did not fail to provide tit-bits for the grown-up children who were sure to be present. The scheme of this treatment of familiar Greek myths—Medusa, Midas, Circe, &c.—possesses a certain interest for the comparative mythologist, as being a continuation of the process of adaptation by which was secured the migration of Oriental fables. The "Tanglewood Tale" is a moralized version of the Greek myth in the same way that "Whittington and his Cat" is a moralized version of "Puss-in-boots," but it is not similarly rationalized. Indeed, the original marvels are sometimes enhanced—the giants made bigger, the pygmies smaller—and there is not a suggestion of any "solar" or other theory of mythology. "No epoch of time can claim a copyright in these immortal fables," says the preface. "They seem never to have been made; and certainly, so long as man exists, they can never perish; but by their indestructibility itself they are legitimate subjects for every age to clothe with its own garniture of manners and sentiment, and to imbue with its own morality." The success is normal but not invariable. The children with poetic pseudonyms—Primrose, Sweet Fern, and the rest—on hearing the story-telling college-student tell how Hercules laughed at the pygmies, and slew their good-natured giant friend, Antæus—must have thought

the demigod a very unamiable character in his treatment of little people and big. This, however, is the only instance in which the Tanglewood Homer has nodded to the extent of following the ancient dream instead of Yankee sentiment. Hawthorne speaks of this as one of the most agreeable literary tasks he ever undertook. The work has charms of local colour. "There was," writes his son, "a long declivity towards Tanglewood and the lake; and, in winter, Hawthorne and the children used to seat themselves one behind another upon the big sled, and go down in headlong career through the snowdrifts, as is related in the "Wonder Book" of Eustace Bright and his little people. Even the collision with the stump, hidden beneath the snow, actually happened precisely as set down in the book, as well as many other humorous and delightful episodes." The introduction to "Tanglewood Tales" is entitled "The Wayside"—name still borne by the house in Concord where the Hawthornes resided in 1853. Here he led his mythical college-student, Eustace Bright, to a summer-house on the hillside, built by his predecessor. "It is a mere skeleton of slender, decaying tree-trunks, with neither walls nor a roof—nothing but a tracery of branches and twigs, which the next wintry blast will be very likely to scatter in fragments along the terrace. It looks and is as evanescent as a dream; and yet, in its rustic network of boughs, it has somehow enclosed a hint of spiritual beauty, and has become a true emblem of the subtle and ethereal mind that planned it." This was the late A. Bronson Alcott, who built a similar bower near Emerson's house, where midsummer story-

telling became an institution. In it the present writer passed many a happy hour of that same year's summer with the children,—each of us in bond for a tale. It is not the least value of his books for children that in them is unconsciously revealed Hawthorne's great love for children. The same is remembered of his gloomy seafaring father. On one occasion some ladies of Concord prepared a picnic in Emerson's grounds for children, the only man admitted being Hawthorne, who so desired to see the little people at play that a hiding-place was found for him near by. His own home was a "Paradise for Children,"—as he calls his beautiful story of Pandora—and never more so than in the year when, after so many troubles, Hope emerged from the box and became a guest in his house.

In the happiest spring that Hawthorne's life had known since he left the Old Manse—that of 1851—his third and last child was born, and named Rose. On May 25th he writes to his wife's sister, Elizabeth, of his hope that his life may be the means of providing more for his family than his death, even were his life insured, and adds :

"Sophia and the baby are getting on bravely. She gazes at it all day long, and continually discovers new beauties. As for me, who look at it perhaps a half-dozen times a day, I must confess that I have not yet discovered the *first* beauty. But I think I never have had any natural partiality for my children. I love them according to their deserts—they have to prove their claim to all the affection they get ; and I believe I could love other people's children better than mine, if I felt that they deserved it more. Perhaps, however, I should not be quite a fair judge on which side the merit lay. It does seem to me, moreover, that I feel

a more decided drawing of the heart towards this baby than either of the other two, at their first appearance. This is my last and latest, my autumnal flower, and will be still in her gayest bloom when I shall be most decidedly an old man—the daughter of my age, if age and decrepitude are really to be my lot. But, if it were not for the considerations in the first part of my letter, I should wish this scribbling hand to be dust ere then.”

In the Italian journals we catch pleasant glimpses of “Rosebud”—as he used to call her—blooming beside her father amid the ruins of Rome.

Yes, Hope had become a guest in the pretty home at Lenox, but, alas, she seemed to make little headway against the cares that had escaped from Pandora’s box. Notwithstanding the brilliant *succès d’estime* of “The Scarlet Letter,” and the five thousand copies sold, Hawthorne’s circumstances were straitened. In the letter last quoted, concerning his new-born Rose, he says :

“The subject of Life Insurance is not new to me. I have thought, read, and conversed about it long ago, and have a pamphlet, treating of its modes and advantages, in the house. I know that it is an excellent thing in some circumstances—that is, for persons with a regular income, who have a surplus, and can calculate precisely what it will be. But I have never yet seen the year, since I was married, when I could have spared even a hundred dollars from the necessary expense of living. If I can spare it this year, it is more than I yet know ; and if this year, then probably it would be wanted the ensuing year. Then our expenditure must positively increase with the growth of our children and the cost of their education. I say nothing of myself—nothing of Sophia—since it is probably our duty to sacrifice all the green margin of our lives to these children, whom we have seen fit to bring into the world. In short, there is no use in attempting to put the volume of my convictions on paper. I should have insured my life, years since, if I had not seen that it is not the thing for a man, situated like myself, to do, unless I could

have a reasonable certainty of dying within a year or two. We must take our chance, or our dispensation of Providence. If I die soon, my copyrights will be worth something, and might—by the exertions of friends, who undoubtedly *would* exert themselves—be made more available than they have yet been. If I live some years I shall be as industrious as I may, consistently with keeping my faculties in good order; and not impossibly I may thus provide for Sophia and the children.”

In the latter part of November, 1851, Hawthorne took up his temporary abode at West Newton, which then had little promise of the pretty villas which now adorn it. It was the residence of his wife's parents, and of the Hon. Horace Mann, who married her sister; and for the rest the prosaic character of this suburb of Boston was rather attractive. For Hawthorne was anxious for some solitude in which he could revive the impressions of Brook Farm—which, by the by, is not far from West Newton. Here, then, was written “The Blithedale Romance.” Of this work I have already spoken, and cannot dwell on it here. It is wonderful that the pen that wrote the other romances should also have written this. What worldly wit, what life studies, and subtlety of suggestion! Not only is every character alive, but the very language in which each is incarnate. When Brook Farm had broken up, these “Blithedale” men and women were met in every street, so that it was absurd to identify one or another as his model. Of course it was Margaret Fuller's fate to be Zenobia, though she was homely and Zenobia beautiful, and without the warm voluptuous *aura* of Zenobia; but what other woman of such commanding power was there at Brook Farm? The theory-blinded Hollingsworth be-



came the many-headed reader of the romance; all the heads, duly self-fitted with Hawthorne's caps, resented his "personal allusions." They never knew what tributes they were paying to the insight of the artist who was least servile to visible models, and painted souls under whatever disguises—conscious or unconscious.

In the summer of 1852, Hawthorne purchased Bronson Alcott's house at Concord, "Hillside," and re-christened it, more accurately, "Wayside." This was the first homestead Hawthorne had owned. It was an humble frame dwelling, yet not without beauty—chiefly of little verandas added by Alcott, who had also built (in this case with his own hands) the hill-side summer bower where the collegian is supposed to tell his *Tanglewood Tales*. On July 14, 1852, Hawthorne writes cheerily to his friend, George W. Curtis, then in Europe:

"The hillside is covered chiefly with locust-trees which come into luxuriant blossom in the month of June, and look and smell very sweetly, intermixed with a few young elms, and white pines and infant oaks—the whole forming rather a thicket than a wood. Nevertheless, there is some very good shade to be found there. I spend delectable hours there in the hottest part of the day, stretched out at my lazy length, with a book in my hand, or some unwritten book in my thoughts. . . . In front of the house, on the opposite side of the road, I have eight acres of land. . . . On the hither side my territory extends some little distance over the brow of the hill, and is absolutely good for nothing, in a productive point of view, though very good for many other purposes. I know nothing of the history of the house, except Thoreau's telling me that it was inhabited a generation or two ago by a man who believed he should never die."

The author whose imagination had already dealt with

the Wandering Jew, turning him into a Virtuoso, had thus come to one of his latest haunts. Even his predecessor there, Mr. Alcott, used to regard it as a mistake to die so soon : he was born with this century, and told the present writer that he meant to see the century out—which perhaps he might have done had not his faculties failed by extreme age. There were thus associations enough to make the would-be immortal “Septimius Felton” an “unwritten book in his thoughts.”

But meanwhile the fact of mortality was brought home to the hillside dreamer in a terrible way. His sister Louisa, leaping from a burning steamer on the Hudson, was drowned.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE tragical death of his sister (July 27, 1852) affected Hawthorne greatly, and he was in the frame of mind for any absorbing task, when one was offered that also promised to be lucrative—a consideration which the depressing state of his finances would not suffer to be omitted. In an evil hour his college friend, Franklin Pierce, having become candidate for the presidency, appealed to his pen for a “campaign biography.” Hawthorne reluctantly undertook the task, on which an admirer of his can now hardly look with satisfaction, whatever he may think of contemporary party explanations of the matter.

The obvious thing is, that Hawthorne wrote a eulogistic Life of the candidate, and was paid for it with the Liverpool Consulate. But even were this the real and the whole case, one might justly reserve all bitter reproaches for the book-piracy which had reduced such an author to the necessity of so bartering his brain for the support of his family. But this is not the whole case. Pierce was candidate of the party to which Hawthorne had all his life belonged, and strictly representative of his political principles. He was also his

loyal friend from college days, had helped to secure him the Surveyorship of Customs at Salem, and, if elected, would pretty certainly have offered Hawthorne office, whether the biography were written or not. Pierce requested this favour. "I have consented," wrote Hawthorne to Fields, who published the book, "somewhat reluctantly, however, for Pierce has now reached that altitude where a man careful of his personal dignity will begin to think of cutting his acquaintance. But I seek nothing from him, and therefore need not be ashamed to tell the truth of an old friend." To Horatio Bridge he wrote that he had vainly tried to persuade Pierce that he could not perform the work as well as others, "and of course, after a friendship of thirty years, it was impossible to refuse my best efforts in his behalf, at the great pinch of his life." In this letter he states that, before undertaking the work, he resolved to accept no office from Pierce, but afterwards inclined to regard this as "rather folly than heroism ;" he now also thinks that Pierce certainly owes him something. "For the biography has cost me hundreds of friends here in the North, who had a purer regard for me than Frank Pierce or any other politician ever gained, and who drop off from me like autumn leaves, in consequence of what I say on the slavery question. But they were my real sentiments, and I do not now regret that they are on record." The preface opens with a remarkable caveat: "The author of this memoir—being so little of a politician that he scarcely feels entitled to call himself a member of any party—would not voluntarily have undertaken the work here offered to the public."

Such, then, is the whole case. Franklin Pierce was a very persuasive person, just the man to win from the feminine side of Hawthorne's heart this promise so reluctantly performed. The sharpness of the above allusion to "Frank Pierce or any other politician" cannot be mistaken. Hawthorne has an angry consciousness that he has been persuaded to descend from the *sanctum* of his genius. Whatever Pierce's friendship, he was sufficiently a "politician" to subordinate his friend's literary reputation to his own elevation to the presidency. "He certainly owes me something," writes Hawthorne to their mutual friend Bridge, of which there can be no doubt, whatever may be thought of Hawthorne's accepting the payment. Pierce was little known in the country—his obscurity being made the most of by his opponents—and Hawthorne's romantic eulogium may have secured his election. The author is to be credited with never having thrown any defensive glamour over this transaction. In 1858, when ex-President Pierce was with him in Rome, Hawthorne reflects with satisfaction that the benefaction was not all on one side. "Each did his best for the other, as friend for friend." This is his own verdict. He knew that Pierce would offer him office, and that his circumstances would not permit him to refuse it; he did not wish to be under unrequited obligations. Thus his fault leans to virtue's side. The only distress one feels in such an everyday kind of thing is based in homage to one who was not an everyday kind of man.

To the present writer it appears that Hawthorne descended from his height to write the book, and re-

mained on that lower level while writing. The "Life of Franklin Pierce," as one reads it in the light of history, seems a sorrier performance than it really was while as yet the candidate was only a good sort of fellow to his friends. But that miserable and murderous administration has been removed, by events that sum up generations, into a past sufficiently remote to admit of a dispassionate verdict on Pierce. An old farmer of his neighbourhood (Concord, N H.), on hearing of his nomination, said—"Frank does well enough for Concord, but he'll be monstrous thin, spread out over the United States." This proved true. Without being merely wise after the fact, one may see in this so-called "Life"—a prolonged encomium—an illustration of how a weak man may sometimes pull a strong one near his own level. In this, his only biography, the subsequent devastator of Kansas, through mere passiveness in the hands of slavery, stands worthy of the Great Stone Face. Plainly, Hawthorne had undertaken a political job, and was too truthful to give it the air of impartial history.

It is shocking to think that such a man should speak—with a sincerity that itself seems deplorable—of the anti-slavery movement as "the mistiness of a philanthropic theory;" still more that his hero's share in the proslavery robbery of Mexico—euphemistically called "war"—should be extolled without any intimation of the indignation felt by every other northern thinker in America. There could be little if any complaint that Hawthorne, as the hermit of his thought, absorbed in his own particular task, should withhold himself from the political agitations of the country, and

even from the struggle for negro emancipation. But in this instance he did descend into the arena, he did participate in the struggle of liberty, reinforcing wrong by a blindness which seems the very counterpart of his clear vision in his own realm. In this partizan plane he repeats, with a tone of profundity, common-places of the proslavery stump. *E.g.*, "There is still another view, and probably as wise a one. It looks upon slavery as one of those evils which Divine Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances, but which, in its own good time, by some means impossible to be anticipated, but of the simplest and easiest operation, when all its uses shall have been fulfilled, it causes to vanish like a dream. There is no instance, in all history, of the human will and intellect having perfected any great moral reform by methods which it adapted to that end." Hawthorne wrote this in August, and if he had dropped his pen and gone to Concord Town Hall, he might have hit the very hour when his fellow-citizens were celebrating the emancipation of slaves in the West Indies by "methods adapted to that end" by human will and intellect. On the other hand, he might have discovered in the seven years American Revolution, what the horrible Civil War had not yet confirmed, those "means of simplest and easiest operation" by which evils are removed when left to be remedied by "Providence, in its own good time." It is tragical to think that such stuff brought Hawthorne more money than all his real works together.

The errors of a good man, says a Hindu verse, are like eclipses of the sun and moon; their darkness all men

deplorable, for their return all men look. In Hawthorne's eclipse the expectancy of his friends was not that he would ever attain knowledge of the subjects treated in the biography of Pierce. There he had somehow suffered a hopeless arrest of development. But they longed for the day when he should emerge from the political "ring" which had used him, and be seen again in his shining height of thought. Though no prospect of advantage, unreinforced by loyalty to early friendship, could have induced Hawthorne to write a campaign document even for the party he preferred, it was but fair, amid the bitter consequences, that payment should be made. It was demanded by all parties, and without reproaches on Hawthorne. So far as it was possible the debt was paid. The Liverpool Consulate was given, and Hawthorne was released from want, and all its temptations, for the rest of his life.

Felicitations were universal. Hawthorne was nearly the only literary man in America who had not opposed Pierce's election, but they all rejoiced. Charles Sumner, leader of the antislavery party in the Senate, wrote a note, in the moment of Hawthorne's confirmation, that "fairly shouted as with a silver trumpet," says Mrs. Hawthorne, "it was so cordial and full of joy. So from all sides Hawthorne seems chosen by acclamation." It is amusing to find Hawthorne himself turned into a dispenser of patronage. Mr. Dreer possesses a characteristic letter, dated at Concord, April 1, 1853:

"DEAR O'SULLIVAN,—It vexes me to see that you are not yet appointed to some most desirable office or other; for I am convinced



that it is only your own fine-drawn scruples that prevent it. I am out of patience with you.<sup>1</sup>

“But what I wish now to say is, that there is a young fellow in New York in whom I feel an interest; and if you had been appointed Post-master, I meant to ask you to find him a clerkship. It is —, the poet; a good little fellow, who has recently got married, and has no means of keeping his wife or himself. He tells me he is a Democrat; but as to hard shell or soft shell, or Barnburner or Hunker, he don't know one from another. His habits and character are unexceptionable; he has shown a good deal of poetic talent, and a small appointment in his favour would reflect credit on the source whence it should come. His claim on me is, that he wrote a biography of my distinguished self in a magazine; and biographers of great men ought to be rewarded—and sometimes are so. Can you do anything for him? I shall not probably have any situation for him at Liverpool; neither would it suit him to go there with his wife, nor, to confess the truth, would it suit me very well to take him. I don't want to be bothered with a poet. Think of this. Parke Godwin, I understand, knows —, and can tell you whether it is best to help him.

“Your friend,

“NATH. HAWTHORNE.”

“P.S.—I mean to go to Washington (for the first time in my life) in about a fortnight.”

The eclipse was long. In the latter part of June, 1853, Hawthorne sailed for Liverpool, and for six years no literary work appeared from his pen.<sup>2</sup> It was the most dignified consulate in the gift of the Government, it involved little of the “society business” which Haw-

<sup>1</sup> O'Sullivan was presently appointed Minister to Portugal, a post at first thought of for Hawthorne.

<sup>2</sup> “My ancestor,” he writes, “left England in 1630; I return in 1853. I sometimes feel as if I myself had been absent these two hundred and twenty-three years, leaving England just emerging from the feudal system, and finding it on my return on the verge of republicanism.”

thorne detested, and was supposed to be a mine of wealth. The latter supposition was, however, delusive, as appears from the subjoined (unpublished) letter, dated September 13, 1853:—

“DEAR X.,—I have been intending to write to you this some time, but wished to get some tolerably clear idea of the state of things here before communicating with you. I find that I have three persons in my office—the head clerk, or vice-consul, at £200; the second clerk, at £150; and the messenger, who does some writing, at £80. They are all honest and capable men, and do their duty to perfection. No American would take either of these places for twice the sums they receive; and no American without some months’ practice would undertake the duty. Of the two, I would rather displace the vice-consul than the second clerk, who does a great amount of labour, and has a remarkable variety of talent, whereas the old gentleman, though perfect in his own track, is nothing outside of it. I will not part with either of these men unless compelled to do so; and I don’t think old Lord Massey can compel me.

“Now as to the Manchester branch, it brings me in only about £200. There is a consular agent there, all the business being transacted here in Liverpool. The only reason for appointing an agent would be that it might shut off all attempts to get a separate consulate there. There is no danger, I presume, of such an attempt for some time to come, for Pierce made a direct promise that the place should be kept open for my benefit. Nevertheless, efforts will be made to fill it, and very possibly representations may be made from the business-men of Manchester that there is necessity for a consul there. In a pecuniary point of view, it would make very little difference to me whether the place were filled by an independent consul or by a vice-consul of my own appointment, for the latter would, of course, not be satisfied with less than the whole £200. What I should like would be to keep the place vacant and receive the proceeds as long as possible, and at last, when I could do no better, to give the office to you. No great generosity in that, to be sure. There, I have put the matter

fairly before you. Do you tell me frankly how your own affairs stand, and whether you can live any longer in that cursed old custom-house without hanging yourself. Rather than that you should do so, I would let you have the place to-morrow, although it would pay you about £100 less than your present office. I suppose, as a single man, you might live within your income at Manchester; but, judging from my own experience, as a married man it would be a very tight fit. With all the economy I could use, I have already got rid of \$2,000 since landing in England. Hereafter I hope to spend less and save more.

“In point of emolument, my office will turn out about what I expected. If I have ordinary luck I shall bag from \$5,000 to \$7,000 clear per annum; but to effect this I shall have to deny myself many things which I would gladly have. Col. Crittenden told me that it cost him \$4,000 to live with only his wife at a boarding-house, including a journey to England now and then. I am determined not to spend more than this in keeping house with my wife and children. I have hired a good house, furnished, at £160, on the other side of the river Mersey, at Rock Park, where there is good air and play-ground for the children; and I can come over to the city by steamboat every morning. I like the situation all the better because it will render it impossible for me to go to parties, or to give parties myself, and will keep me out of a good deal of nonsense.

“Liverpool is a most detestable place as a residence that ever my lot was cast in—smoky, noisy, dirty, pestilential; and the consulate is situated in the most detestable part of the city. The streets swarm with beggars by day and by night. You never saw the like; and I pray that you may never see it in America. It is worth while coming across the sea in order to feel one’s heart warm towards his own country; and I feel it all the more because it is plain to be seen that a great many of the Englishmen whom I meet here dislike us, whatever they may pretend to the contrary.

“Myself and my family have suffered very much from the elements. There has not been what we should call a fair day since our arrival, nor a single day when a fire would not be agreeable. I long for one of our snowy days and one of our good hearty rains. It always threatens to rain, but seldom rains in good earnest.

It never does rain, and it never don't rain; but you are pretty sure to get a sprinkling if you go out without an umbrella. Except by the fireside I have not been as warm as I should like to be; but the Englishmen call it a sultry day whenever the thermometer rises above 60°. There has not been heat enough in England this season to ripen an apple.

"My wife and children often talk of you. Even the baby has not forgotten you. Write often, and say as much as you can about yourself, and as little as you please about A, B, and C, and all the rest of those wretches of whom my soul was weary to death before I made my escape.—Your friend ever,

"NATH. HAWTHORNE."

The "Lord Massey" referred to was Secretary-of-State Marcy. The initials are not those of the persons named in the original. The lugubrious note sounded in this letter did not improve. It is as impossible to acquit Hawthorne of some provincialism as Liverpool of the capacity for bringing it all out. Henry Bright, a gentleman of fine wit, whom he had met in America, tried by every art to make the place pleasant for him. The Heywoods were also devoted. What success they had is discoverable in this note of July 5, 1855:

"DEAR MR. BRIGHT,—I have come back (only for a day or two) to this black and miserable hole.—Yours truly,

"NATH. HAWTHORNE.

"P.S.—I don't mean to apply the above two disparaging adjectives merely to my Consulate, but to all Liverpool and its environs—except Sandheys and Norris Green."

These exceptions were the homes of the Heywoods and the Brights. In fact, there is something in Hawthorne's whole sojourn in England to remind one of a theme he noted in early life, of a person or family

desiring a particular good, and, when it finally arrives, finding it the pest of their lives. He did, indeed, find some benefits; sufficiency of means for the time—though saving was necessary—enabled him to enjoy and assist the mental growth of his children. But it was a hard fate for a mind so active—as proved by his “Note Books”—to be unproductive for long years. Some bitterness must have mingled with the disappointment in finding the emoluments of the Consulate so much less than reported—during his tenure they were reduced much lower by Act of Congress—in remembrance of the uncongenial and costly task which had received a reward so paltry.

But, beyond all this, there was a deeper fact which made England an unfortunate appointment for Hawthorne—a fact now, happily, so incomprehensible, that its mention may raise a smile of incredulity. The old Anglophobia had been revived by the share taken by England in the anti-slavery agitation; it had become the special heritage of the democratic party, and confused with patriotic sentiment. Hawthorne inhaled this prejudice from the Custom House atmosphere, both in Boston and Salem, and now from the party which appointed him—the “democracy” being exasperated by the English enthusiasm for Mrs. Stowe. He meets “Grace Greenwood” (Mrs. Lippincott) in England, and mentions her regret at leaving the country, “the manners and institutions of which she likes rather better, I suspect, than an American ought.”<sup>1</sup> She speaks raptur-

<sup>1</sup> This remark adds to the point made by Leslie Stephen in a fine chapter on Hawthorne (“Hours in a Library”). He thinks Haw-

ously of the English hospitality and warmth of heart. I likewise have already experienced something of this, and apparently have a good deal more of it at my option. I wonder how far it is genuine, and in what degree it is better than the superficial good-feeling with which Yankees receive foreigners—a feeling not calculated for endurance, but a good deal like a brushwood fire. “We shall see!” I am assured by eminent Englishmen that, at that time, the average Englishman was apt to assume airs towards an American, which could hardly fail to keep alive such hereditary prejudices as those of Hawthorne.

It is melancholy to think that this combination of causes should have made the stay of such a man in the country which first stamped his genius as pure gold, so unsatisfactory. He appears to have met few except second-rate writers. His career in England was a failure. He never knew the giants of his own art—Thackeray, Dickens, Reade, George Eliot. He saw Tennyson in a

thorne was afraid of coming to like England and the English too well. It may also be remarked that Hawthorne was strangely unconscious of the esteem felt for him in England. He is overwhelmed by the kindness of Lady Webster in showing him through Battle Abbey, and of Mr. Evelyn in following him to Mr. Tupper’s with three rare volumes which Hawthorne had failed to see, in his absence, when calling with Francis Bennoch at Wooton. He should never have expected such kindness, he says with naivete. “I liked him [Mr. Evelyn], and felt that I could become intimately acquainted with him if circumstances were favourable; but at a brief interview like this it was hopeless to break through two great reserves.” Unfortunately, he declined the hospitalities of Wooton, as of some other places which might have brought him really into “Our Old Home,” which he so timidly looked on from the outside.

picture-gallery, and wrote a fine description of his appearance, but never met him ; nor Carlyle, Mill, Grote,—not the men who might have made his sojourn a cosmopolitan education. He did indeed meet the Brownings, but hardly has a word to say till he meets them again in Florence. “He looked younger and handsomer than when I saw him in London,” and so on. “When I met her [Mrs. Browning] in London, at Lord Houghton’s breakfast-table, she did not impress me so singularly.” There is plenty of racy recognition of the Brownings, and of other English authors met under Italian skies ; but the few magnates of literature casually met in England, before he went to Italy, were overcast by the lingering mist and official torpor of Liverpool. On his return from Italy, as we shall see, it was better ; but during that brief and busy visit the lost opportunities could not be recovered.

The only thing during his consular career which excited Hawthorne’s interest was the scandal caused by the brutal treatment of seamen on American ships. His despatch, written just after his resignation, states forcibly the case—that the United States has no native seamen, and that the maltreated were generally landsmen (returning emigrants) trying to secure passage to Europe without payment. The ship-masters, being without legal means of enforcing their authority, dislike the service, and their class deteriorates. To this matter the following extract, from a letter (loaned me by Mr. W. R. Benjamin, of New York) to Elizabeth Peabody, refers :—

“I do not know what Sophia may have said about my conduct in

the Consulate. I only know that I have done no good; none whatever. Vengeance and beneficence are things that God claims for Himself. His instruments have no consciousness of His purpose; if they imagine they have, it is a pretty sure token that they are *not* His instruments. The good of others, like our own happiness, is not to be attained by direct effort, but incidentally. All history and observation confirm this. I am really too humble to think of doing good! Now, I presume you think the abolition of flogging was a vast boon to seamen. I see, on the contrary, with perfect distinctness, that many murders and an immense mass of unpunishable cruelty—a thousand blows, at least, for every one that the cat-of-nine-tails would have inflicted—have resulted from that very thing. There is a moral in this fact which I leave you to deduce. God's ways are in nothing more mysterious than in this matter of trying to do good.

“This is the last letter I shall write you from the Consulate. My successor is in town, and will take the office upon him next Monday. Thank Heaven; for I am weary, and, if it were not for Sophia and the children, would like to lie down on one spot for about a hundred years.

“We shall be in England, however, some weeks longer. Good-bye.”

It was, however, precisely in that dismal time and place that Hawthorne was surprised into acting the leading part in a romance as thrilling as any he ever wrote. In early life he imagined the story of a person going about and making converts to some new theory, but presently, while addressing a meeting, discovered to be an escaped lunatic. Poor Delia Bacon, the anti-Shakespearian apostle, had not yet reached the asylum when she persuaded Emerson, Hawthorne, even Carlyle, to take her seriously (albeit sceptically); but her biography, by Theodore Bacon, leaves little room to doubt that her mind was affected by an early disappoint-



ment, and her career hysterical. The personal charm and refined enthusiasm of Miss Bacon fairly magnetized Hawthorne; it did not appear to him incredible that the vicar at Stratford-on-Avon, and the sexton, had given her—apparently if not really—opportunity to open the grave of Shakespeare, in the night, in search of documents which were to disprove his authorship of the plays. The potency of the imprecation on that grave was shown in the faltering of her own heart. It was previous to that mythical scene in the church, so impressively described by Hawthorne in "Our Old Home," that he undertook to write an introduction to her "Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare." He was reluctant to do this; he did not believe in the paradox, and wrote to her (May 12, 1856), "As to the case of the 'Old Player' (whom you grieve my heart by speaking of so contemptuously), you will have to rend him out of me by the roots, and by main force, if at all." He did not (as she entreated) read the most unreadable of books, but dipped into the huge MS. here and there; he forewarns the reader of an attack on Shakespeare, which it does not contain, and praises the work for what is not there. This introduction, and the correspondence between Hawthorne and Miss Bacon, make her biography an addition to the curiosities of literature. Never was greater generosity than that of Hawthorne to the distraught lady; besides introducing the book whose (supposed) notions he abhorred, he paid for its publication. He also sent the impecunious lady money, and altogether lost some £200 by her. He was repaid by her insane anger. Hawthorne's particular friend in

London, Francis Bennoch, tells me that, at his request, he visited Miss Bacon at Stratford-on-Avon several times, and saw her book through the press, though he knew she was insane. She told Mr. Bennoch that she had resolved to die in Stratford, and had arranged with the sexton to have her grave dug near the church wall, on a line with Shakespeare's, and that the wall would be pierced, so that her spirit might have free intercourse with that of the poet. As it was only the "Old Player," and not the real poet, according to her theory, this sentiment might suggest returning sanity; but it was some years after her removal to an asylum, and for a short time before her death in America, that the cloud lifted from her brain sufficiently even to enable her to see Hawthorne's kindness in its true light.

Hawthorne visited interesting places in England—the Lakes, where he vainly tried to shout into Harriet Martineau's ear-trumpet; Stratford-on-Avon, where he failed to see the Flowers who take Americans under special care; Old Boston—and in November, 1857, took lodgings at 24, Great Russell Street, London. This was after his resignation, in June. He remained in London fifty days, in strange seclusion, so far as the living London was concerned, but observing well the London of bygone ages. Passing over to Paris (Jan. 3, 1858), he plunges into such ferocious weather that "England has nothing to be compared with it." His patriotism is sufficiently cooled for a sound comment on the uselessness of an American Legation. "There is no good reason why Uncle Sam should pay Judge Mason seventeen thousand dollars a year for sleeping in the dignified post of Ambassador to France.

The true ground of complaint is, that whether he slept or waked, the result would be the same." He was eager to go South, and the little time passed at Paris and Marseilles was devoted to ordinary sight-seeing. He was in Marseilles when an attempt was made on the Emperor's life, but no feeling about the incident is recorded in his "Note Books." The first note of joy is sounded in response to a sunset "that reminded us of what we used to see day after day in America, and what we have not seen since."

## CHAPTER XII.

**I**N the third week of January, 1858, the Hawthornes reached Rome. The new Rome had not then been added. The population was about half of what it now is, and the civilized comforts for the visitor far inferior to what they now are. The sacred hills were not yet invaded by the temporal railway. From Civita Vecchia the journey was by coach. The road being not yet secure from banditti, the Hawthornes remembered the proverbial hilarity of the empty traveller in meeting the robber, and hid their gold in an old umbrella and other unsuspecting places. So they entered Rome, and took up their abode in Palazzo Sarazzani, Via Porta Pinciana, where Hawthorne's Italian experiences began with an influenza. He found himself among friends, and passed two winters there,—between which I shall not carefully distinguish. The historian Motley was in Rome with his family during the winter of 1858-9. Motley had a profound admiration for Hawthorne's genius, and there are interesting notes of their friendship in his letters, edited by his daughter, Lady Harcourt. W. W. Story, the sculptor, was a native of the same town, Salem, and had met Hawthorne in the office of his friend Hillard, with whom Story

studied law. Hawthorne, Story, and Motley formed a sort of rambling club among themselves. Every Sunday they wandered on the Campagna, depending on the casual Albergo for their luxuriant luncheon of bread and cheese and sour wine. From the surviving comrade I learn that those who knew Hawthorne as a shy and taciturn man would not have recognized him on these rambles; he laughed, chattered, leaped. "We were as three boys together." Hawthorne had just liberated himself from his consular galleys at Liverpool, and was rejoicing in his freedom. He had come to Rome only to give his family—particularly his wife, and their daughter Una, both devoted to art—a pleasant excursion. For himself, he had little knowledge of art, and no taste for ruins, and it was to be some time before he should take Rome seriously. Soon after his arrival the Carnival came on: Hawthorne actually entered into the frolic, and took his shower of confetti like a man. They were symbols of sunbeams coming after a severe winter. Hawthorne really enjoyed the society he met in Rome, which, besides the Storys and Motleys, included Mrs. Jameson, Miss Bremer, the poet Bryant, Harriet Hosmer, the Hookers, the artists Terry, Thompson, Ropes, and Miss Lander, who made the bust of him now in Concord Library. It was only after the publication of Hawthorne's journals that the artists knew how carefully he had been observing their works. Mr. Story tells me that while he was at work on his "Cleopatra" Hawthorne sometimes sat beside him, but said little, and he (the sculptor) suspected his friend did not like the work. He had not yet received "Transformation" when some

English ladies asked to see "Cleopatra," before which one of them read the description aloud. The sculptor then advanced from his work with inquiries, and thus for the first time discovered the impression his statue had made on Hawthorne.

Hawthorne had no thought of writing a romance about Rome when he arrived there. But Rome presently held him with its glittering eye.

"That moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me,  
To him my tale I teach."

In vain the guest tries to get free. He rages at the rubbish of Rome, literal and moral. He pictures Rome, repeatedly, as a corpse. The similitude recalls the legend of Saint Francis of Assisi at the bedside of a woman who had entreated his presence to receive her dying confession. He has arrived after her death, but summons the corpse back into consciousness long enough to whisper her secret burden. The spell of Hawthorne's mystical romance lies in the secrets he hears from pallid lips of Rome's past, and also—for the confession was not all on one side—in its self-revelations. Hawthorne's genius is expressed equally in other works, but it is in "Transformation" that his inner history is told,—and therein all the evolutionary years of New England, whereof he was the characteristic flower. Having come so far the book reaches far: it has had the phenomenal success of becoming at once the tourist's guide and the scholar's interpreter. "I have read it seven times," said Dean Stanley to a friend. "I read it when it appeared, as I

read everything from that English master. I read it again when I expected to visit Rome, then when on the way to Rome, again while in Rome, afterwards to revive my impressions of Rome. Recently I read it again because I wanted to." "Transformation" has thus made its way into public favour, despite faults which lovers of romance especially resent—inconclusiveness, and the raising of mysteries never explained.

The disappointments almost hid for a time the real value of the work. *The Saturday Review* congratulated Americans on having produced a writer of English who had "few rivals or equals in the mother country," but complains that, in "Transformation," a "mystery is set before us to unriddle, and at the end the author turns round and asks us what is the good of solving it." Henry Chorley, to whom Hawthorne owed his first recognition in England, was constrained to say, in the *Athenæum*, "We know of little in romance more inconclusive and hazy than the manner in which the tale is brought to a close. Hints will not suffice to satisfy interest which has been excited to voracity." The general grumbling attested the power of the wizard, and he was overwhelmed with private questions. Compelled to some response, he added a "Postscript" to the second edition; but this left unsolved the real riddles. What crime had the old model committed; and by what ingenuity had he so involved innocent Miriam, that she was in his power? With what motive did he torment her? What became of Miriam and her lover?

These questions are not answered because they are unanswerable. The mistake was in calling the work a

romance. The artist has portrayed four characters, and surrounded them with an ornamental frame of Roman scenes. If the whiteness of one requires a very dark background, the pigment is supplied, whether ground from a mummy or a murdered monk. Hilda must be too pure for friendship with an accomplice of homicide; Miriam too noble to be an accomplice in any but a transcendental homicide, by which the reader is relieved, and then only by an unconscious look; Donatello must be heroic, as if, summoned by the appealing look, he had slain a dragon about to devour the maiden. An original crime so dark, so continuous and all-pervading as to supply such various artistic requirements, is unknown to history, and consequently incommunicable.<sup>1</sup> For our artist's purposes—to supply shades and backgrounds for his characters—it is enough to declare that the mysterious horror had occurred, and to show its evil reflection on the persons portrayed. Had he described the crime he would be met by vociferous declarations of its impossibility or inadequacy. His four portraits, his ornamental frame, would have been lost sight of in the discussion. Nor could he ring commonplace wedding-bells over Donatello without marring the unique character. Under

<sup>1</sup> He artfully raises the crime into his romantic atmosphere by hinting that it bore some resemblance to that of Beatrice Cenci, but, had it been identified as that, his reader's feeling towards Miriam would be entirely changed. Her air of innocence would be repulsive. The relation between Miriam and the Model suggests that between Hester and her husband, in "The Scarlet Letter," but the comparison cannot be pressed without fatally modifying Miriam's character. The artist prefers to accept his scoldings rather than mar his characters.



the ray of love, and the shock of crime inspired by love, a soul is born in the Faun; it is proved by renunciation, by confession and surrender. While his execution would be intolerable, his release would dim his crown of martyrdom. Subsequent happiness, after even a chivalrous homicide, would argue a downward development. It was necessary to leave his fate undetermined.

Despite its artful sheen of romanticism, "Transformation" is a rather realistic drama. It is more American than Italian, even the scenery amid which it is mounted being cunningly moralized into harmony with characters by no means Italian. It is a liability of the Yankee, in becoming cosmopolitan, to know every country except his own; but Hawthorne was never cosmopolitan—New England may always be discovered looking through his eyes. The characters of "Transformation" are indeed invested with a widely human interest, but two of the models—Hilda and Kenyon—are Bostonian; Miriam, though portrayed from a Jewess met in London, is naturalized into American independence; and the only professed Italian, Donatello, is more like Henry Thoreau of Concord, than any historical personage. Thoreau used to amuse us by gently raising fish out of the water; to those who did not know that the fish was the bream, which is bold enough to try and protect its spawn—which Thoreau's hand threatened—the feat was sufficiently marvellous to suggest Donatello's intimacy with the wild creatures around Monte Beni.

Hilda—the name was fixed on at Whitby Abbey—in her tower, surrounded by white doves, and keeping alive the Virgin's lamp, may appear a romantic figure. She is,

however, a "prophetic picture" of Hawthorne's eldest daughter. "Una," says her brother Julian, "was the first-born, and on many accounts perhaps the dearest of the children. She had the finest mind of any, the most complex and beautiful character, and in various ways most strongly resembled her father." Hawthorne always called the Old Manse at Concord his Eden, and Una was the sweetest flower from it. She grew to be a fair maiden, with golden-tinted hair, who not only appeared to have stepped from Spenser's poem, but had a dreamy way of thinking. In a game of comparisons, one of her young friends told me, Una was always vague—"like a shadow," "like a perfume," she would say, without the slightest affectation, as if these were the things most familiar to her. Art became her natural expression, and it was while beguiled by some fascinating ruin she was sketching in Rome that she slipped within the typhoid coils. Una's illness overshadowed Rome for Hawthorne. Both he and his wife appear to have been strangely helpless, and the case was entirely trusted to a foolish physician, who declared that Una must die on the seventeenth of the month. The miserable parents surrendered to this fate without questioning. Every morning Hawthorne counted another day off Una's life; and Mrs. Hawthorne sat, with pen and paper, writing down the girl's utterances. Mrs. Story, who visited them constantly, tells me that Hawthorne's grief was most touching. He used to sit by the fire warming tea-leaves for Una, having heard that such heating would bring out the flavour. At last Mr. and Mrs. Story saw that Hawthorne was in more danger than Una: they insisted that another physician

should be called, declaring that no man who ventured to prophesy the exact far day of the girl's death could be trustworthy. Another physician—like the other, homœopathic—was brought in, and said Una would recover—as she did.

While Hawthorne was writing the first sketch of "Transformation"—in the Villa Montauto, near Florence—Una had her room in the tower, which is somewhat idealized in the description of Monte Beni Castle. "Adjoining Una's chamber," says the journal, "which is in the tower, there is a little oratory, hung round with sacred prints of very ancient date, and with crucifixes, holy water vases, and other consecrated things; and here, within a glass case, there is the representation of an undraped little boy in wax, very prettily modelled, and holding up a heart that looks like a bit of red sealing wax." There was also a skull—a rather gruesome object for the bedroom of a girl of fifteen. Here Una sketched, and became herself a fair model for Hilda in her tower, feeding the Virgin's lamp.

To her acquaintances Una, after her illness, appeared the same as before; it is probable, however, that the father felt that all was not as before. An inner physical weakness was betrayed in a religious longing for something to lean on, which her father could not supply, and which could not be satisfied with the transcendentalism of Mr. Channing, whose ministrations the family—Hawthorne excepted—had attended in Liverpool. These tendencies, and even their hysterical complication, are suggested in the picture of Hilda in St. Peter's, written in England a year after Una's illness. "She

laid her forehead on the marble steps before the altar, and sobbed out a prayer; she hardly knew to whom, whether Michael, the Virgin, or the Father; she hardly knew for what, save only a vague longing that thus the burden of her spirit might be lightened a little. . . . A hope, born of hysteric trouble, fluttered in her breast. She came to a confessional on which was inscribed PRO ANGLICA LINGUA. It was the word in season! . . . She did not think; she only felt. Within her heart was a great need. Close at hand, within the veil of the confessional, was the relief."

But there is a melancholy contrast between Hilda's ideal and Una's actual fulfilment of the "prophetic picture." Hilda's lamp went out, her doves departed, because the confessional had proved a portal of imprisonment in the Convent of the Sacré Cœur. From her Protestant pilgrimage to Catholic shrines, ending in temporary captivity, she returned to be a happy wife. Una's physical and spiritual natures were, like her father's, fused into one life; her spells of weakness were accompanied by loss of mental balance. When bereavement of her parents was added to her physical delicacy, she made a brave effort at self-reliance. She devoted herself to orphans in London, with an orphan's sympathy. She received confirmation in the English Church, and loved its services. Her friends rejoiced that Una's lamp was re-kindled, and her dove of peace returned; and presently at her happy betrothal. Alas! death snatched away her lover, and Una sank, after so great calamities. Her golden hair was grey at thirty-three. With the fatal shaft in her heart she could only carry it to her father,

whose spirit symbolized for her the supreme love, and sought something like her little oratory at Montauto. But that lost bower could not be found. In its place was taken a cell in the English convent at Clewer, where (1877) her brother found her, at midnight, dead.

In the character of Hilda, in "Transformation," Hawthorne has projected, as it were, his own soul. It was he who from the hard region of Puritanism had come to kindle a lamp and set a flower before a divine mother; but to do this in the solitude of his individuality. The formalisms and superstitions of the world can reach that tower only as white doves. The devout artist recognizes the Madonna only as she grew genuinely, like the rose which the New England maiden so simply laid before her, from her lover's bouquet. The Madonna and her Protestant votary had travelled to their tower by the same road. It may sound a far cry from the Coliseum to Gallows Hill, Salem; but morally they are the same. Good people were torn by wild beasts at Salem also, because they were heretics to the reigning religion. There was no moral difference between Jupiter Tonans at Rome, and Jehovah Tonans in Massachusetts. The pilgrimage of New England from deified despotism to the maternal deity, in all but sex, of Channing, was on the same spiritual path that led Rome to build the Madonna's shrine.

Lady Hobart, who now resides at Montauto Villa, informed me that until lately there grew on the tower a bush. It was that, no doubt, which finds a mystical growth in the romance there written. "He [Kenyon] looked about him, and beheld growing out of the stone

pavement, which formed the roof, a little shrub, with green and glossy leaves. It was the only green thing there; and heaven knows how its seeds had ever been planted, at that airy height, or how it had found nourishment for its small life, in the chinks of the stones; for it had no earth, and nothing more like soil than the crumbling mortar, which had been crammed into the crevices in a long past age." Hawthorne's new spiritual vision now recognizes evergreen growths where his religious training taught him to see only crumbling idolatry.

An interesting variant of "The Celestial Railway" is imaginable, which should describe the iron track on which religious opinion travels in England and America. The scientific conception of unity in nature, which influenced the creed of Newton, may be called, in an American phrase, a new departure. From that grand station the rationalistic railways proceed past way-stations—pantheism, optimism, unitarianism, monism—with a regularity like that of the Catholic "Stations of the Cross," or the stages of Bunyan's pilgrimage. A new line of speculative thought, as when Samuel Laing becomes a "Modern Zoroastrian," or Hartmann declares the "supreme unhappiness" of the deity—strikes the normal Western wayfarer as mere eccentricity.

It is a singularity of Hawthorne's career that he never got on this familiar track of religious "progression," nor did he originate any other. From the frequency of fanatics, Puritans, ministers, in his tales, he might be supposed to have had the usual experiences of a New England boy bred in an orthodox household—suffering remorseless sabbaths and painful prayers. But the

Hawthorne home in Salem seems to have been exceptionally free from religious rigours. He seems to have known there neither cant nor catechism; his earlier writings betray no self-questionings or inner misgivings. There is no trace of trouble about his soul. He was never "converted," and never joined any church. He was not what could be called a religious man. His treatment of ministers and pious professions are those of an intellectual observer, or an artist whose neighbourhood supplied mainly those models, but who cared for these only as they might be adaptable to his pictures. His moral sense was quick, and a fine individual character resulted; but he could not enter into a cause, like that of emancipation, which was the expansion of ethical sentiment under a religious enthusiasm. The cause of the slave flowered out of Channing's faith in the divinity of human nature—divinity of the lowliest, even the most repulsive. Hawthorne knew nothing of such idealization of humanity in the abstract. He evoked from the gross mass certain types of character, and they were as a gallery amid which he moved. New England supplied no other gallery; and its churches admitted no art but music, for which he had no ear. A cold alienation from the creed that had made his two magisterial ancestors the Nero and Caligula of Salem had developed an antipathy to all churches, even to those which were doing away with Puritanism in all its survivals.

There was thus a sense in which the untransformed Faun also represented Hawthorne. The Faun at the Capitol attributed to Praxiteles, while described with physiological exactness, is subtly touched here and there

into physiognomical suggestiveness.<sup>1</sup> One is now reminded of our arboreal ancestor, as revealed by Darwin, and now of Byron's "form and face of an Apollo, with the feet and legs of a sylvan Satyr," as disclosed—treacherously, Hawthorne thought—by Trelawny. But the sculptor's art, which has preserved the signs of inferior origin only in graceful "survivals," is carried farther by that of the author, who harmonizes the complex conception with the Miltonic Adam. "Adam falls anew, and Paradise, heretofore in unfaded bloom, is lost again."

This immemorial theme had travelled from ancient Palestine to England, had sailed on the *Mayflower* to

<sup>1</sup> One error, however, occurs in Hawthorne's description of the statue. He says the Faun's "nose is almost straight, but very slightly turned inward, thereby acquiring an indescribable charm of geniality and humour." This, though true of the Faun which names the adjoining saloon, is not true of Hawthorne's Faun. I suspect this is a proof-reader's error; for the more humorous character of the *nez retroussé* must have been known to such a connoisseur in noses as Hawthorne. I have before me a paper of his, written while editor of the Bewick Company's Magazine, in which he gives passages from an old book on Noses, with comments:—"A Nose indifferently long, and small in the middle, signifies a person bold, rational, honest, soon angry but soon pleased.' As noses go, this is worth any money. It is not to be sneezed at. 'A Nose every way very big, very long, and with wide nostrils, denotes a person more weak than wise, fallacious, subtle, contentious, luxurious, vain-glorious, envious, and impertinently curious.' When we meet this Nose we shall hardly refrain from giving it a tweak. 'A Nose conveniently big, and reasonably straight, denotes a person peaceful, meek, faithful, laborious, diligent, secret, and of good intellect.' Oh, happy nose! Mayest thou continually inhale the scent of roses! And may we, no long time hence, find just such a nose in a fair lady's face!"



New England, was there preached for six generations, and journeyed in the genius of Hawthorne, over land and sea, to give this Faun in the Capitol a new soul of which its sculptor never dreamed. And once more we find, as in "The Scarlet Letter" (the mark of Cain), the "House of the Seven Gables" (visitation of the father's sins on the children), that no amount of alienation from churches could keep the great New England novelist from breathing the biblical atmosphere. But hitherto he had been able to give such ideas artistic expression precisely because his soul stood outside them—as Lador's *Aspasia* says the poets wrote so well of love because they never loved. But in the atmosphere of Rome the artistic is subordinated to the religious expression. A transformation in Hawthorne preceded the transformation of his *Marble Faun*. He had not the least interest in pope, priest, or pious ceremonies, but the religion pictured in the galleries and monuments entered the sacred retreat where eloquent preachers had, for a generation, knocked in vain. "Occasionally to-day I was sensible of a certain degree of emotion in looking at an old picture; as, for example, by a large, dark, ugly picture of Christ bearing the Cross and sinking beneath it, when, somehow or other, a sense of His agony, and the fearful wrong that mankind did (and does) its Redeemer, and the scorn of His enemies, and the sorrow of those who loved Him, came knocking at my heart, and got entrance there. Once more I deem it a pity that Protestantism should have entirely laid aside this mode of appealing to the religious sentiment." This is pathetic; the great man at fifty-four begins as if at the knee of a

wiser mother than Salem, with its unlovely dogmas and churches, had been to him. He would fain do better by his child. "Una spoke with somewhat alarming fervour of her love for Rome, and regret at leaving it. We shall have done the child no good office in bringing her here, if the rest of her life is to be a dream of this 'city of the soul,' and an unsatisfied yearning to come back to it. On the other hand, nothing elevating and refining can be really injurious, and so I hope she will always be better for Rome, even if her life should be spent where there are no pictures, no statues—nothing but the dryness and meagreness of a New England village." We may often read between the lines of his journals how homeless his spirit had been. Of Michel Angelo's Fates he writes: "I remember seeing an etching of this when a child, and being struck, even then, with the terrible, stern, passionless severity, neither loving nor hating us, that characterizes these ugly old women. If they were angry, or had the least spite against humankind, it would render them more tolerable. They are a great work, containing and representing the very idea that makes a belief in fate such a cold torture to the human soul." This is the corpse of Puritanism re-animated for a confession to Rome. For this child it had brought from barbarism its altar of unhewn stones. It might even have been better for this child had he, after the earlier fashion, been forced to eat the stones for bread, for then he must needs have pulverized some of them, and made them bear other green things like that which grew from the chance seed wafted from Michel Angelo's picture, and devoured with such pathetic hunger. As it was, his spiritual starvation

was long unconscious. He remarked in the Vatican a very hungry boy who, beside the great porphyry vase, wished he had it full of soup. Rome and Salem might there have exchanged a blush. Rome had provided her child with art but not soup; Salem hers with soup but not art. Hawthorne, who had become as a child amid these pictures, may have felt that he and the soupless boy were both changelings. The marble statues said to him as to stolen Mignon, "What's this, poor child, to thee they've done?" He had come back to his father's hall. "No place ever took so strong a hold of my being as Rome, nor ever seemed so close to me and so strangely familiar."

One cannot read without emotion these secret records of a soul for the first time discovering that it had been moving about amid worlds not realized, while the intellect is still but half conscious of the heart's sad secret. One hardly knows whether laughter or tears were the bitter response to Hawthorne's anger with Carlo Dolce for sceptical misgivings inspired by his picture of the "Eternal Father."

"It is the All-powerless, a fair-haired, soft, presumptive deity, with a mouth that has fallen open through very weakness. . . . If Carlo Dolce had been wicked enough to know what he was doing, the picture would have been most blasphemous—a satire, in the very person of the Almighty, against all incompetent rulers, and against the rickety machine and crazy action of the universe. Heaven forgive me for such thoughts as this picture has suggested! . . . I wonder what Michel Angelo would have said to this painting."

Hawthorne sees in the Sistine Chapel what Michel Angelo would say of it. In the Jesus of the Last Judgment he beholds the man, sufficiently strong-willed, to whom the reins of omnipotence are delivered at the last day. "Above sits Jesus, not looking in the least like the Saviour of the world, but, with uplifted arm, denouncing eternal misery on those whom He (*sic*) came to save. I fear I am myself among the wicked, for I found myself inevitably taking their part, and asking for at least a little pity, some few regrets, and not such a stern, denunciatory spirit on the part of Him who had thought us worth dying for." Hawthorne is consoled at last by the Jesus of Fra Angelico's "Last Judgment." "Above sits Jesus, with the throng of blessed saints around Him, and a flow of tender and powerful love in His own face, that ought to suffice to redeem all the damned, and convert the very fiends, and quench the fires of hell. At any rate Fra Angelico had a higher conception of his Saviour than Michel Angelo."<sup>1</sup> And Raphael relieves our pilgrim from that Doubting Castle into which he had been thrust by Carlo Dolce's suggestion of the "crazy action of the universe." In the upper and lower parts of the Transfiguration, neither aware of the other, he finds it symbolical of "the spiritual shortsightedness of mankind that, amid the trouble and grief of the lower picture, not a single individual, either of those who seek help or those who

<sup>1</sup> But the Judge is looking only to those on His right; fortunately for Fra Angelico, Hawthorne did not observe the companion-picture near by, in which the face of Christ is distorted with anger, as it turns to those on His left.

would willingly afford it, lifts his eyes to that region, one glimpse of which would set all right."

Thus, late in life, Hawthorne gathered from Italy's pictures the flowers of faith which had been strewn in vain at his feet by Emerson, Channing, Parker, and many another, in such forms as language could paint. The then pictureless New England had been for this latter-day Bunyan a sort of City of Destruction. The imprisonment of his genius in the Liverpool consulate may have been, as Bedford gaol to his forerunner, the portal to spiritual visions. In "Transformation" we follow a pious pictorial pilgrimage, whose visions hover over ancient shrines but eclipse their legendary lustre. The persons are characters, at once real and allegorical, representing, as we have seen, the thought and feeling of the American and the Englishman; and the Roman scenery amid which they act their imported parts is, by subtle process of selection and interpretation, conformed to the new spirit. Hawthorne has, in fact, supplanted the old legends of Rome with a new set. In Hilda's Tower I observed a fresco, painted since "Transformation" appeared, in which the most prominent figure is an ape. The poor creature had a comical suggestion of trying to reclaim his legendary rights from a dove, represented as just alighting on the opposite wall. For centuries before its invasion by Hilda and her doves the place was known as the Palazzo della Scimmia, and its legend was of a babe rescued by the Virgin from the parapet over which it was held by a pet monkey; in gratitude for which, and in accordance with a vow made on seeing his child's peril, the owner raised there the

Madonna's image, and ordained that the lamp should burn perpetually before it. Hawthorne tells the legend in his Italian journal (i. 264), but in "Transformation" there is no faintest hint of it. He will not have any animal associated with his Beloved less ethereal than the white dove, which he remembered in the sculpture at the Capitol—the dove clasped to her breast by a child who is attacked by a snake—"symbol of the human soul, with its choice of Innocence or Evil close at hand." The painted ape will never recover his legend: it is no longer the tower "della Scimmia," but Hilda's Tower. Even Clelia, the Countess Marone's pretty maid, who guided me to the tower, had but hazy ideas of the ape-legend, but evinced a blushing pride at being Hilda's successor in keeping the lamp burning.

The old ape-legend—of which there are variants in Munich and elsewhere—is of much interest to the student of folklore and mythology, who may not like Hawthorne's disregard of this and other legends. Connoisseurs in art and archæology have pointed out errors—sometimes with the precision of a man of science who proposed to amend Shakespeare's phrase about "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." Obviously it should be stones in the running brooks, and sermons in books. Hawthorne's awakened religious nature was too overpowering to admit of an unbiassed or scientific view of what attracted him in Rome. He wrought in the same sincerity and the same spirit that turned temples to churches and gods to saints. This was the man who had come to Rome, and this the strange eye that was turned upon it. Mrs. W.

W. Story told me that she drove with him along the Appian Way, by whose interminable memorials of vanished life and splendour he was deeply impressed. At length they came to a place where the wind was playing on telegraph-wires, making a weird music—now of low moanings, now rising to screams, or sinking into plaintive, tremulous sounds. Hawthorne asked that the carriage should stop; he was thrilled by these sounds, and, after listening long in silence, said, “I hear the wailings of former generations.”

Long had the winds blown there before the wires were stretched which gave them such notes, and long had the burden of Rome waited for such utterance as it found on the heart-strings of Hawthorne. They had been attuned under the burden of New England's sad and guilty past; the cries of scourged and executed witches, mingling with every wind from Gallows Hill, the sighs of Hester Prynne with the cruel Scarlet Letter on her breast, had become audible on them. In nearly the same words that he had written concerning Hester he wrote of *Beatrix Cenci*, in the Barberini palace. “It was the very saddest picture ever painted or conceived, the sense of which came to the observer by a sort of intuition. It was a sorrow that removed this beautiful girl out of the sphere of humanity, and set her in a far-off region.” As on Gallows Hill he forgot the landscape, and Salem embowered with elms, in his vision of his Puritan ancestors looking down on that scene of their cruelties, so now the Coliseum's grandeur is hidden by the assemblage of remorseful shades looking from those tiers of broken arches on the arena of their savage

pleasures. He overhears a conversation between Hadrian and the archangel on San Angelo. Hadrian, complaining of his mausoleum's treatment, is instructed that "where a warlike despot is sown as seed, a fortress and a prison are the only possible crop." And again: "All that rich sculpture of Trajan's bloody warfare, twining from the base of the pillar to its capital, may be but an ugly spectacle for his ghostly eyes, if he considers that this huge storied shaft must be laid before the judgment-seat as a piece of the evidence of what he did in the flesh."

Remembering the apathy of Hawthorne concerning slavery in America, one cannot help perceiving his limitations. Ex-president Pierce, the devastator of his country's liberties, came to Rome, sat sympathizingly besides Una's bedside, and no doubt joined with his old college friend in branding ancient oppressors. The two moving about Rome recall those spirits seen by Dante, whose doom was to see only what *was* remote, all that was around them being invisible. We must be content that the blood-stained president was branded under the name of Hadrian or Trajan, however the old friend might be welcomed; and the poor negro sympathized with, if only in person of the European pauper.

Scholars learned in the language and arts of Italy are sometimes impatient with Hawthorne. Mr. Eugene Schuyler (in the *New York Nation*, July 11 and 18, 1889) says that "he remembered only the impressions which had been made on him, and frequently his entries seem like impressions of his impressions." Robert Browning shrewdly answered a preacher who asked his



opinion of his sermon, which had been on Nature: "I might have been better satisfied if, instead of describing nature, you had given us the impression made by nature on you." On Rome enough has been written; the only useful thing Hawthorne could add was the impression it made on himself—his very Salem-and-Concord self. His friend Curtis relates that once, when looking at a poor picture in a country inn, in Massachusetts, Hawthorne said to a friend, "There is something very charming to me in that picture, which I suppose is a daub. But I think that a painter is entitled to the credit of all the good things that anybody finds in his picture." This may be provincialism, but it is a sweet provincialism, and it makes Hawthorne's Italian journal a religious autobiography. It holds him to his point of view, that is, to his originality. "The plastic sense was not strong in Hawthorne," says Mr. Henry James, jun.; "there can be no better proof of it than his aversion to the representation of the nude in sculpture." That this is not quite true is shown in the fact that "Transformation" itself is the transfiguration of a nude statue. That Hawthorne was at first repelled by such nudity is true. It was mainly from a high-minded woman, Mrs. Jameson, that he learned to suspect himself of error, in this feeling, which is finally relegated to one of his female characters, where it is quite natural. He also sat at the feet of his friend Story. He saw the "Cleopatra" he so admired grow under the sculptor's hand, and it was an educational experience. There is not, indeed, very much nudity about that statue, but the innocency of its voluptuousness gave Hawthorne a sense of time-perspective.

Cleopatra belonged to a time and place where her draping or undraping could no more be questioned than her Egyptian blood, or the serpent-symbol on her brow. He found that what he disliked was not nudity but nakedness—not, that is, exposure which is appropriate to the artistic purpose, but that which is inappropriate to it. We presently find that his greatest enthusiasm is evoked by the Medicean Venus at Florence. The Puritan sentiment lingered just enough to leave us an important remark concerning that statue, which, on account of its attitude, has so often been accused of mock modesty. “I felt,” writes Hawthorne, “a kind of tenderness for her; an affection, not as if she were one woman, but all womanhood in one. Her modest attitude—which before I saw her I had not liked, deeming that it might be an artificial shame—is partly what unmakes her as a heathen goddess and softens her into a woman.”

From other examples of Hawthorne's critical insight I select one of intrinsic interest. Guido's “Angel and Satan” (Church of the Capucins) is often called the “Archangel and Lucifer;” but this is the millennial angel, bearing a chain for the devil—who is not the starry Lucifer, new-fallen, but the enemy of man, stained and disfigured with ages of evil. The most chivalrous sympathizer with the sufferer in a combat cannot feel any pity with this cruel, crafty, demon—sum of every creature's worst. He is passionlessly, organically bad, and Hawthorne used this countenance for the evil being who dogs Miriam's footsteps. He is a motiveless tormentor whom we are meant not to pity; we can feel only relief when he is pitched over the Tarpeian Rock.

But Hawthorne suggests that in Guido's picture there should be some sign of a struggle. There is not a loosed string of the dainty sandal, not a ruffled feather of the angel's wing, to indicate that there has been any combat. The criticism has rightly adhered to the picture. It cannot be said that there is no sign of a combat because the angel represents omnipotence, for the angel has brought a weapon. The far-reaching import of Hawthorne's criticism was impressed on me by a picture at Sorrento, of the same subject, by Sangarelli. Here the fiend's eyes expand with surprise, as well they may, for the angel, under whose tiny foot he lies, is slight as a maiden of seventeen, and bears no weapon at all. This angel bears on the left arm a shield barely large enough to hold the words, "QUIS UT DEUS," and the weaponless right hand points upward to the source of this subduing strength — the Dove. This picture, I felt, was painted by an artistic Hawthorne, who perceived that if Satan were conquered by a carnal weapon there should be some sign of struggle, and who preferred his vision of good overcoming evil with good. This little angel seems, indeed, to be the child sculptured in the Capitol, attacked by a snake and pressing the dove to her breast, in a further phase: here the dove hovers over the child, and the demon is under the little feet.

On the evening of May 15, 1858, nearly four months after Hawthorne reached Rome, his friend Mr. Thompson, an American artist, guided him to the Via Portoghese, and showed him the tower, with its Virgin and ever-burning lamp (which, whatever it did then, now

burns only at night), which play such an important part in "Transformation." Hawthorne records the legend in his journal without any moral reflections. It was by comparatively slow steps that he came to recognize the significance of that shrine. Among all the entries in his journal of the first winter in Rome I can discover no serious impression made by any picture or statue of the Virgin. We have seen how distressed he was by the wrathful Christ in Michel Angelo's "Last Judgment." He mentions the "grim saints" around the inexorable judge, but fails to see the Mother at his side, in whom the artist had painted all the compassion that Hawthorne felt, and for which he looked in the "Saviour." Michel Angelo had painted the Divine compassionateness in the maternal being who had been evolved to represent it. Puritanism had eliminated the Madonna, but for Hawthorne, and other hearts that flowered above that thorny stem, Jesus had absorbed the Madonna and revealed her gentle features. "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" had faded out of the New England scholar's Bible. By the maternal Jesus, Hawthorne had judged the ancient monuments of Rome, and it was some time before he perceived that, in Italy, it was the feminine nature which had come to symbolize the softly subduing force to which its cruel Cæsarism, pagan and Christian, steadily surrendered.

It was in Florence that Hawthorne first began to observe carefully pictures of the Virgin. Those of Raphael, Perugino, Correggio, are "stations" of his pilgrimage to that shrine where Hilda—his self-delineated soul—is kneeling. He is astonished now at meeting

his old undevout self in a prosaic Englishman. "I liked the man, and should be glad to know him better. As for his criticism, I am sorry to remember only one. It was upon a picture of the Nativity, by Correggio, in the Tribune, where the mother is kneeling before the Child and adoring it in an awful rapture, because she sees the eternal God in its baby face and figure. The Englishman was highly delighted with this picture, and began to gesticulate, as if dandling a baby, and to make a chirruping sound. It was to him merely a representation of a mother fondling her infant."

These passages were written at the time that Hawthorne was blocking out his Faun novel, while Una sat near in her tower, and perhaps knelt in her oratory.

The family had left Rome, May 24, 1858, and after a drive through Soracte, Terni, Foligno, Assisi, Perugia, Passignano, Arezzo, Incisa, reached Florence early in June. "This journey from Rome has been one of the brightest and most uncareful interludes of my life." The next two months were passed in Florence, in the Casa del Bello, in luxurious enjoyment of pictures, drives, studios, and artists—Landor, then rapidly sinking, he did not meet, but enjoyed the Brownings. He had charming interviews with his countryman, Hiram Powers, enjoying his racy narratives of early life in Cincinnati, and the Inferno he made there with wax figures, as well as his statues. Powers had obtained for him the beautiful abode near his own. He could not understand the alliance of such a man with Pierce, but they had many feelings in common, and used to sit together on the

house-top dreaming of invisible worlds and intelligences. Early in July the Brownings left for the seaside, and the Hawthornes went to reside at Montauto Villa. In a letter of July 18, 1858, now before me, Powers writes to a friend: "The House of the Seven Gables is very domestic, does not seem inclined to visit his neighbours much, and when he does his stay is short." Hawthorne had now, indeed, called around him other companions,—Donatello, Hilda, and the rest. From the ancient tower, whence imprisoned Savonarola looked on the city where his stake was prepared, Hawthorne gazed on the beautiful hills. He could almost see the garden where Boccaccio pictured his story-telling circle. I have heard that, when he ascended the tower, he used to draw the last ladder up after him. I was hospitably admitted by Lady Hobart, the present occupant, to the study in which "Transformation" was written, and recognized in the pretty nymphs and Cupids on its ceiling the "angels and cherubs" which they appeared to the author's unsophisticated first glance.

Among other interesting experiences at Florence were some in "Spiritualism." Miss Ada Shepherd, a governess in the Hawthorne family, "developed" into a writing medium. "Her integrity," says Hawthorne, "is absolutely indubitable, and she herself totally disbelieves in the spiritual authenticity of what is communicated through her medium." Hawthorne had no philosophical objection to hypnotic marvels. His feeling on such matters is suggested in a note (sent me by Mr. W. R. Benjamin) written to Elizabeth Peabody when leaving the Consulate.

“And the very fact of my speaking so implies all the love and respect which, because I speak so, you are ready to disbelieve. As for Miss —, I have long ago taken her measure, though she has failed to take mine. What you tell me about the letter is very curious, and it goes to confirm my previous idea of such revelations. A seeress of this kind will not afford you any miraculous insight into a person's character and mind; she will merely discover, through the medium of the letter, what another person, of just the same natural scope and penetration as the seeress, would discover normally by personal intercourse and observation of the person described. Thus her revelations (like all our conceptions of other person's characters) have some truth and much error.”

Julian Hawthorne tells an astonishing story about the experiments with the governess at Villa Montauto, near Florence. One day the name of “Mary Rondel” was written by the medium. Mary said that in her life on earth she had been in some way connected with the Hawthorne family, and wanted Nathaniel Hawthorne's sympathy. Hawthorne remembered nothing of any such person; the matter was dismissed and forgotten; but, after Hawthorne's death, he—Julian—discovered in family papers that Daniel Hawthorne, grandfather of our author, had indeed had a love affair with one “Mary Rondel.” Julian was about twelve years of age at the time of the manifestation, and probably got his account by hearsay. According to Hawthorne (“French and Italian Note-Books,” ii. 145) the name written was Mary Runnel—not Rondel—nor does he mention that she wished his sympathy, or sent him any message. “The other spirits,” he says, “discredited the veracity of Mary, who frequently manifested herself, and whenever there was any mistake or falsehood the odium was laid on her.” “The whole matter,” he adds, “seems to

me a sort of dreaming awake. It resembles a dream, in that the whole material is from the first in the dreamer's mind, though concealed at various depths below the surface; the dead appear alive, as they always do in dreams; unexpected combinations occur, as continually in dreams; the mind speaks through the various persons of the drama, and sometimes astonishes itself with its own wit, wisdom, and eloquence, as often in dreams; but in both cases the intellectual manifestations are really of a very flimsy nature. Mary Runnel is the only personage who does not come evidently from dreamland; and she, I think, represents that lurking scepticism, that sense of unreality, of which we are often conscious, amid the wild phantasmagoria of a dream. I should be glad to believe in the genuineness of these spirits, if I could; but the above is the conclusion to which my soberest thoughts tend."

Hawthorne was pretty well acquainted with his family history, and his intimation that Mary Runnel did not come from dreamland suggests that he had some remembrance of a note concerning her, and of his grandfather's romance. Miss Shephard, who enjoyed the family intimacy, may have seen or heard the name, and forgotten it; or the resemblance between the names of the spirit and Daniel's sweetheart may be a curious coincidence.

Julian Hawthorne is mistaken in his impression that the Brownings were present at these séances. Robert Browning told Mr. Story that neither he nor his wife was present on any such occasion, and that they were never at the Villa Montauto at all. It is, indeed, a pity



that Robert Browning was not present, for, as Hawthorne says, the "phenomena" generally disappeared under his powerful gripe. Mrs. Hawthorne, it should be stated, was inclined to Spiritualism. Under the circumstances the only scrutinizer present could hardly be very rigid; but he recognized in the medium's "messages" only such things as were likely to be in his wife's mind, and concluded that the transference was "mesmeric."

The Hawthornes returned to Rome after the middle of October, 1858. It was during this second winter in Rome that Una's illness occurred; and, indeed, I have in this chapter dealt with the events of Hawthorne's sojourn in Italy without careful distinctions of place and time. But the time came for leaving the beautiful land for ever. On May 26, 1859, Hawthorne passes the morning in revisiting certain places. "Methought they never looked so beautiful, nor the sky so bright and blue. I saw Soracte on the horizon, and I looked at everything as if for the last time; nor do I wish ever to see any of these objects again, though no place ever took so strong a hold of my being as Rome, nor ever seemed so close to me and so strangely familiar. I seem to know it better than my birthplace, and to have known it longer."

Rome was, indeed, the place of his new birth. It could not, however, give a congenial home to the spirit it had awakened any more than his first birthplace. So far as Rome is related to him it is inseparable. The pilgrim bears away the interpretations, and does not wish to return to the House of the Interpreter. And meanwhile Rome remains serenely unaware that New England

has come, and looked, and is driving off in a coach to Civita Vecchia—to the New World. “Transformation” has not been translated into Italian, and it is pretty certain that the average Italian could not understand it. Rome is as unaware as the Marble Faun that it has been turned into a fable. Our driver, in the Borghese gardens, looks incredulous when we bid him stop at a space where we see Donatello and Miriam, the contadinas and French soldiers and English tourists, and hear the harp and the tambourine which have set them all into their mad sylvan dance, presently to melt into air, like Prospero’s insubstantial, but never-ending, masque. W. D. Howells, in his delightful “Italian Journeys,” speaks of visiting the Tarpeian Rock, not because of those anciently thrown over it, but because of Miriam and Donatello. Thousands have gone there for the same reason, but no impression has the new legend made on the old rock. We asked the custodian the spot at which the old monk fell and was killed. She promptly replied, “He was not killed at all. The newspapers said so; but he was taken to the hospital and is now quite well!” In his artful legend of Memmius, the heathen spy on the Christian refugees of the catacomb (St. Calixtus), Hawthorne has caught the very trick and accent of Roman folklore,—for instance, of Malchus, who, unconverted by the miraculous mercy that healed his smitten ear, must journey till Judgment Day round a subterranean pillar. We asked our guide whether he had ever heard of this Memmius haunting the catacomb, vainly seeking daylight. Thinking we might be apprehensive, he vehemently declared,

“I have been here night and day these thirty years and never saw or heard of any ghost here yet.” The old priest selling photographs at the entrance said, “There are souls so wicked that they are not permitted to rest, and this Memmius, if he did as you say, was very wicked. But no such phantom was ever known here.” So moves on old Rome, the graceful furry ears impenetrable to the new Orphic strain to which the walls of a new city are steadily rising around it.

### CHAPTER XIII.

HAWTHORNE was eager to reach England and write his romance. He enjoyed his voyage on the Mediterranean, but hurried through France and Switzerland. There was some stay at Avignon, and at Geneva, but no incidents occurred beyond ordinary sight-seeing. Hawthorne had really been homesick ever since he left Concord, and his face shone as it was now turned homeward. He intended to proceed immediately, and wrote on to have passages from Liverpool secured at once. After posting the letter, at Geneva, he writes: "It makes my heart thrill, half pleasantly, half otherwise; so much nearer does this step seem to bring the home whence I have now been absent six years, and which, when I see it again, may turn out to be not my home any longer. I likewise wrote to Bennoch, though I know not his present address; but I should deeply grieve to leave England without seeing him. He and Henry Bright are the only two men in England to whom I shall be much grieved to bid farewell."

These, indeed, were the only two Englishmen whom Hawthorne as yet knew. And Henry Bright knew him. One of the cleverest things ever written about him was

Henry Bright's "Song of Consul Hawthorne," printed in Julian Hawthorne's work :—

"Should you ask me, 'Who is Hawthorne?  
 Who this Hawthorne that you mention?'  
 I should answer, I should tell you,  
 'He's a Yankee, who has written  
 Many books you must have heard of;  
 For he wrote "The Scarlet Letter"  
 And "The House of Seven Gables,"  
 Wrote, too, "Rappacini's Daughter,"  
 And a lot of other stories;—  
 Some are long, and some are shorter:  
 Some are good, and some are better.  
 And this Hawthorne is a Consul,  
 Sitting in a dismal office,—  
 Dark and dirty, dingy office,  
 Full of mates, and full of captains,  
 Full of sailors and of niggers,—  
 And he lords it over Yankees.' . . .  
 Do you ask me, 'Tell me further  
 Of this Consul, of this Hawthorne?'  
 I would say, 'He is a sinner,—  
 Never goes inside a chapel,  
 Only sees outsides of chapels,  
 Says his prayers without a chapel!  
 I would say that he is lazy,  
 Very lazy, good-for-nothing;  
 Hardly ever goes to dinners,  
 Never goes to balls or soirées;  
 Thinks one friend worth twenty friendly;  
 Cares for love, but not for liking;  
 Hardly knows a dozen people.'"

But a dozen was too large a number, when this witty Hiawatha-rhyme, which greatly pleased Hawthorne, was written. He resolved to remain another year in Eng-

land, in order to re-write and publish "Transformation." Rome and Florence had greatly humanized him, and, but for the necessity of finishing his romance, he would probably have enjoyed a free year in London. As it was, after the work (completed at Redcar and Leamington) was in the hands of his publishers—Smith and Elder—in February, 1860, he passed nearly four pleasant months in London and Bath. He visited Whitby, and Coventry, where he met the Brays and Hennells.<sup>1</sup> In May he was the guest of the Motleys for some days—a most happy visit. He had left his family in Leamington, and daily posted to them letters written for him by Una before he left. He was in his merriest mood. "I dined with the Motleys at Lord Dufferin's, on Monday evening, and there met, among a few other notable people, Mrs. Norton, a dark, comely woman, who doubtless was once most charming, and still has charms, at above fifty years of age." "You would be stricken dumb," he says in a letter, "to see how quietly I accept a whole string of invitations. . . . The stir of this London life, somehow or other, has done me a wonderful deal of good, and I feel better than for months past." He sat to a German

<sup>1</sup> At Coventry he was the guest of Mr. Bill. My friend, Mrs. Charles Bray, writes: "My husband and I were invited to meet him at dinner; and as he took me in to dinner he sat next to me, and I think talked exclusively about Miss Evans, asking questions of all kinds about her, which I was very glad to answer to one so appreciative and so interesting as himself. He was one of the few men of genius whose personality corresponded with the ideal we had formed of him; and to this day I can recall vividly his modest, almost shy, manner, and his very expressive and strongly intellectual face."

sculptor, and, at Motley's request, allowed his photograph to be taken by Mayall,—an excellent one. He chatted with Tom Hughes and Layard at the Cosmopolitan Club on Sunday evenings, dined with Henry Chorley of the *Athenæum*, and breakfasted with Richard Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton). He visited Leigh Hunt, *proprio motu*! He was invited by Samuel Lucas, editor of *Once a Week*, to write a romance for that publication, and name his own terms. All this sweetened his last days in England. He could not indeed escape from his doom of shyness when in company, but bore an amiable aspect. Lord Dufferin told me that at the dinner at his house Hawthorne did not indeed talk much, but manifested interest in those present and in what was said. "And we felt at every moment that we were in the presence of those large wonderful eyes!" Shy though he was, Hawthorne was never confused in company. When addressed his reply was to the point. In a discussion of some sentence in the Queen's speech, whose grammar was questioned, Hawthorne, appealed to, remarked, "Surely the Queen may do what she will with her own." He also amazed his friends by the ease and wit of his after-dinner speeches. He especially enjoyed one of the free-and-easy evenings at the Working Men's College, where he was taken by (Judge) Thomas Hughes. The songs happened to be of the patriotic kind, and Hawthorne was delighted; he fairly surrendered to these Englishmen when they sang the "Tight Little Island," and ran up the flag. He said afterwards, "I never before understood this English feeling."

Nevertheless, despite this final spurt, it was too late

for Hawthorne to get what England had for him. This was certainly not the fault of England. Lord Houghton, the chief host of literary guests, was unwearied in his efforts to beguile Hawthorne, even before his departure for Italy, into the London circle. Houghton came to the conclusion that Hawthorne had some personal dislike for him, which was far from the fact. Hawthorne was simply one of the later "survivals" of the old anti-English democracy come down from the Revolution, and preserved with care in the heavy atmosphere of his odious consulate in Liverpool. He had taken refuge in the Elizabethan Age, and never saw the Victorian Age at all. His book, "Our Old Home," is a sort of antediluvian record. When, in that volume, venturing out of his happy intimacy with the ancient worthies of Leamington or Stratford, Hawthorne described the Englishwoman as made up of steaks and sirloins, there was an amusingly anachronistic tone of democratic defiance in the criticism. *The Times* summed it up as the Yankee saying, "My wife's prettier than yours." *Punch* remarked that the opinion was all the more weighty because of Hawthorne's well-known dash and address in society. Henry Bright wrote to him, "Mrs. Heywood says to my mother, 'I really believe you and I were the only ladies he knew in Liverpool, and we are not like beefsteaks.'" So far as the life of the English people was concerned, Hawthorne might have written a better book had he never left Concord. But "Our Old Home" should be taken as the Whigs took the biography of Pierce—as a romance. To Pierce, this democratic fling at England is appropriately dedicated.



Its chapters are, indeed, full of romantic interest, all the more entertaining by the interwoven sketches of reality—the best of these being that of poor Delia Bacon.

Hawthorne was astonished and distressed at the indignation "Our Old Home" excited in England. He protested that in his comparisons of the two peoples the balance was almost invariably cast against his own. "They do me great injustice in supposing I hate them. I would as soon hate my own people." When he came to think over the matter, to see England in the distance—his small consular worries forgotten, his party faith shaken by the war—I suspect that he began to realize his failure to make the most of his irrecoverable opportunity. In 1863, when my wife was about to leave Concord, where we had resided, and join me in London, Hawthorne—who had been very kind to her in my absence—showed her his many photographs, and expressed his strong hope of soon returning to England. "Una longs for England, and so do I." Alas! when Una sailed it had to be without him. When death's hand was strong upon him, he wrote, "If I could but go to England now, I think that the sea-voyage and the 'old home' might set me all right." They were nearly his last words,

#### CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Hawthorne returned to America his acquaintances generally remarked the greater ease of his manners. This is mentioned in a note before me from a lady of Boston, who often entertained him in her house. "The self-consciousness of Hawthorne, which men called his shyness, was a natural concomitant of his solitary life and extreme sensitiveness. In England he lost something of this, you know, but it was another proof of the subtle connection between our physical and spiritual natures more easy to discern than to comprehend." He impressed me—the present writer—as of much nobler presence than formerly, and certainly he was one of the finest looking of men. I observed him closely at a dinner of the Literary Club, in Boston, the great feature of which was the presence of Hawthorne, then just from Europe (July, 1860). His great athletic frame was softened by its repose, which was the more striking beside the vivacity of Agassiz, at whose side he sat—himself a magnificent man in appearance. Hawthorne's massive brow and fine aquiline nose were of such commanding strength as to make the mouth and chin seem a little weak by contrast. The upper lip was

hidden by a thick moustache; the under lip was somewhat too pronounced, perhaps. The head was most shapely in front, but at the back was singularly flat. This peculiarity appears in a bust of Hawthorne now in the possession of his friend and banker, Mr. Hooker, at Rome. It is by Phillips, and is especially interesting as representing the author in early life, before the somewhat severe mouth was modified by a moustache. The eyes were at once dark and lucid, very large but never staring, incurious, soft and pathetic as those of a deer. When addressed a gracious smile accompanied his always gentle reply, and the most engaging expression suffused his warm brown face. The smile, however, was sweet only while in the eyes; when it extended to the mouth it seemed to give him pain. There must have been battles between those soft eyes and this mouth. His voice was sweet and low, but suggested a reserve of quick and powerful intelligence. In conversation the trait that struck me most was his perfect candour. There was no faintest suggestion of secrecy. I have a suspicion that his shyness was that of one whose heart was without bolts or bars, and who felt himself at the mercy of every "interviewer" that might chance to get hold of him.

On his return to Concord, Hawthorne repaired to his residence, "Wayside," with such avoidance of parade that the quiet little town was for some days ignorant of his arrival. The first thing he set about was having a tower added to his house, something like that which had so fascinated his imagination in the *Via Portoghese*, at Rome. This was set aside as his study, or rather as his writing-place, for the library was in another room.

Hawthorne was oppressed by a crowd of people even when represented by their books. Like his friend Longfellow he liked to stand while writing, and a high desk was the only furniture absolutely necessary in the tower where his winged fancies were received. These never flitted out of books. It is rare to find a quotation in Hawthorne's works. I was startled on finding in his journal Emerson's line, "They builded better than they knew," and recalled a story, told me by Dr. Loring, that Hawthorne complained that American poetry had no quotable lines. Dr. Holmes, on hearing this, said, "Ah, he has forgotten Longfellow's 'Art!'" ("Art is long and time is fleeting.")

In fact, Hawthorne was embarrassed by the quantity of his own mental furniture, which had been greatly increased by his long silent sojourn in Europe. He made haste to clear the English sketches out of his way, and set himself to the blocked-out romances brought from Europe. The English fragment, posthumously published as "The Ancestral Footstep," had been shoved out of his mind by the overwhelming experiences of Rome. He had brought from Florence the suggestion of a pretty story. He had visited an old Englishman, Seymour Kirkup, long resident in Florence, antiquarian and reputed necromancer, a spiritualist too, holding converse, through a medium, with dead poets and emperors. He found the quaint old man in an ancient house of the Templars; his face was shrivelled, his silken hair white, his eyes as if seeing something that struck him with surprise. Amid curious old masks, frescoes, parchments, he moved, always followed by a

pale, large-eyed little girl. She was the daughter of a beautiful Florentine woman who had lived with the old necromancer as his spiritual medium until her death, and whose powers of spiritual communication the girl inherited. Then there was the haunting story told him by Thoreau of his own house, "Wayside," whose earlier occupant believed he could live for ever. These airy dreams, less manageable than Hilda's doves, fluttered to his Wayside Tower, each eager to nestle on his desk. It was hard to choose, and he was contriving how he might fold them all to his breast at once, or put them in the columbarium of one romance, when the clangour of war frightened them away.

On his return to Concord, Hawthorne was so eager to make up in literary work for the five barren consular years, that he was in danger of becoming a prisoner in his tower. Even when he walked the streets his eye had a look of being still in that aerial solitude. And indeed Emerson's son, in his delightful account of his father's home life, tells a story which shows how far away from Concord Hawthorne was, and at the same time how desirous he was of knowing more of the Hildas near his door. I quote the anecdote as freshly told in a letter from my friend Edward Emerson :

"When the family returned to Concord after their European sojourn, and we had renewed our acquaintance with the children, one Sunday evening, at about half-past eight, the door-bell rang, and to our astonishment Mr. Hawthorne was shown in. Father was away and mother not well, and Edith and I sat alone in the parlour. Mr. Hawthorne explained that his call was upon Miss Ellen (of whose virtues he had much from his wife and Una). Ellen [Emerson's eldest daughter], as was her custom, had gone to bed at eight,

so there was nothing for it but for Mr. Hawthorne to make the best of it with us. He was, as I always remember him, kindly, but shy as a wild thing from the woods; and to conceal his embarrassment even with us, children of thirteen and fifteen, took up the stereoscope we had on the table and began looking at the views. He presently asked us of what places they were taken. They represented the Concord Common, the Court House and Town House, and the Milldam, as we call the centre of the town where the stores and post-office are. He evidently asked in good faith, and, though he walked through these places on his visits to the post-office and railway station, knew as little about them as the fox that might burrow in his hillside did."

Although the absorbed author never visited his neighbours, those who had reason to visit him were kindly received. Among these was W. D. Howells, then known to a comparatively small circle, and, as a poet, Hawthorne recognized the young author's ability, and sent him to Emerson with a card on which was written, "I find him worthy."<sup>1</sup> His loyalty in friendship was put to the test by his publisher's warning, and that of others, that the dedication of "Our Old Home" to Ex-President Pierce, an object of universal odium, would endanger the book's success. "If he is so exceedingly unpopular that his name is enough to sink the volume, there is so much the more need that an old friend should stand by him," and "the literary public must accept my book precisely as I think fit to give it, or let it alone."

<sup>1</sup> In reply to a question concerning this visit, Howells tells me, "Hawthorne took me up on the hill behind Wayside, and we had a silence of half an hour together. He said he never saw a perfectly beautiful woman; asked much about the West; and wished he could find some part of America 'where the cursed shadow of Europe had not fallen.'"

At Bowdoin College there had been a military company of students, of which Frank Pierce was commander, and Hawthorne a soldier. There is almost a military ring in this insistence on his dedication to his old captain. And indeed there was a martial element in Hawthorne, which asserted itself during the war along with his disgust at its causes.<sup>1</sup> This was curiously illustrated in his descriptive article on the subject, which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1862. By his eulogistic "Life of Pierce" Hawthorne had done more than, it is to be hoped, he ever knew to raise the terrible Frankenstein; and as the phantasm would not let him work he went forth to survey its desolations. He visited Washington, met President Lincoln and his Ministers, went to the camps and battlefields in Virginia. In the old engine-house at Harper's Ferry, which John Brown had seized as a fortress in his attack on slavery, and which became his prison, it is a marvel that Hawthorne did not see the executed captain shaking his gory locks at him. For it was he whom Hawthorne had extolled into the presidency whose oppression in Kansas had driven the good captain mad, and indeed made the war inevitable. Hawthorne's article is sparkling, graphic, cynical. When with the soldiers his bosom swells with patriotic pride, and almost gloats over the prospective defeat of the South; when he is with the politicians he is an old proslavery democrat again, and pities the poor negroes on account of their

<sup>1</sup> A remarkable letter from Hawthorne to Francis Bennoch (after whom a room at Wayside was named), relating to the war, was printed in my "Emerson at Home and Abroad."

sad prospect of liberty. One or two passages of the article as originally written the editor refused to publish,—among these the very striking portraiture of President Lincoln, which Houghton and Co. have done well to restore in their edition of Hawthorne's works. When the article appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* it was accompanied by footnotes sneering at the writer, or severely rebuking him. "Can it be a son of old Massachusetts who utters this abominable sentiment? For shame." "The author seems to imagine that he has compressed a great deal of meaning into these little, hard, dry pellets of aphoristic wisdom. We disagree with him," &c. &c. After reading the article, with these terrible editorial comments, the present writer (then residing in Concord), in alarm for the consequences to Hawthorne, rushed with the magazine to Emerson's house. Emerson read the censorious notes and quietly said, "Of course he wrote the footnotes himself."

It was about that time that I passed a day or two with Hawthorne at the house of James T. Fields, in Boston. He had aged rapidly, and appeared vague and lost amid the whirl of events, about which he was inclined to be silent. On one evening other guests came, and I was deputed by some ladies to try and coax him from his room. I found him reading Defoe's ghost stories, and, after listening affably to my request, he so entertained me with talk about the stories that I forgot my mission. He asked me to tell him some of the ghostly lore of negroes in my own State (Virginia), and showed much interest in the few that I remembered. He hardly appeared the same man as that taciturn personage I had



sometimes met in company—though not, of course, among friends so near as those under whose roof he now was. At breakfast he appeared with an amusing look of boyish meekness, as if expecting reproach from Mrs. Fields for not having shown himself in the drawing-room the evening before. He met, of course, only sunshine, and was warmed by it into a charming flow of talk—most of it being about England. He had been so pained by the reception of his book, "Our Old Home," in England, that he had begged Fields to send him no more notices of it from the English press. The sketches, which had appeared as papers in the *Atlantic Monthly*, had unfortunately been hurried into a volume, amid many worries, without such revision as we now got at the breakfast-table, where all his memories of England were happy.

I was at that time devoting myself to the cause of emancipation, and was daily hearing from some of our anti-slavery rank and file sharp words concerning Hawthorne, but never for a moment did I have any such feeling towards him. Being a Virginian who had known the loneliness of social exile on account of my anti-slavery views, I felt some nearness to this Northern man, whose opposite views had suddenly isolated him. This strange being from fairyland was not to be judged by common standards. On the subject that absorbed all minds he could not converse with his intimate friends. His old democratic friends either did not like his patriotic advocacy of the war, or had been converted by events from his lingering sympathy with Southern politics. He had not the flexibility of principle displayed by so many

in those days. He thus had no party,—then nearly equivalent to having no country.

Probably there was not an individual in the United States who would have subscribed his article, "Chiefly on War Matters." Although he wished for the military success of the North, and began to think slavery at least a national nuisance, he did not at once share the general enthusiasm for the Union.

"Though I approve of the war as much as any man," he wrote to Horatio Bridge, "I don't quite understand what we are fighting for, or what definite result can be expected. If we pummel the South ever so hard, they will love us none the better for it; and even if we subjugate them, our next step should be to cut them adrift. If we are fighting for the annihilation of slavery, to be sure it may be a wise object, and offer a tangible result, and the only one which is consistent with a future union between North and South. A continuance of the war would soon make this plain to us, and we should see the expediency of preparing our black brethren for future citizenship by allowing them to fight for their own liberties, and educating them through heroic influences. Whatever happens next, I must say that I rejoice that the old Union is smashed. We never were one people, and never really had a country since the constitution was formed."

Hawthorne lent an eager ear to the Hon. Martin F. Conway, a member of Congress, who came to Concord to make converts to a policy he had for peaceful dissolution of the Union. He was a native of Maryland, though he represented Kansas, and was an eloquent anti-slavery champion. He urged on the anti-slavery men, what then seemed to be true, that emancipation was no part of the purpose of the administration in the war, which was likely to end in some compromise with

that institution, leaving the slaves more hopelessly bound than before. Whereas with separation all constitutional compromises with slavery would lapse; the area of negro liberty, instead of being in distant Canada, to which the fugitive must escape, would be carried down to the Potomac and the Ohio; and, as the North would no longer be under the constitutional obligation to return negro fugitives, they would all gradually escape. This reasoning made an impression on us all, and Hawthorne, for one moment of his life, stood with a good many anti-slavery men. But further events speedily identified the war with emancipation, and all side schemes and theories were merged in the struggle.

The first two years of the war, its miserable blunders, its fearful massacres, were depressing enough even for those who had faith in a heavenly advent of liberty for the slave, and liberation of the nation from Slavery; but for Hawthorne, with no enthusiasm of this kind, it was a prolonged nightmare. His only happiness, he said, was that his son was too young to enlist; his regret, that he himself was too old. Gradually, however, like other literary men, he had to establish some *modus vivendi* with the situation. He locked himself in his tower, took up the so long paralyzed pen, and addressed himself to write a romance. It came hard. "There is something preternatural in my reluctance to begin," he wrote his urgent publisher, Mr. Fields. "I linger at the threshold, and have a perception of very disagreeable phantoms to be encountered if I enter. . . . There are two or three chapters ready to be written, but I am not robust enough to begin, and I feel as if I should never carry it through. . . ."

Seriously, my mind has, for the present, lost its temper, and its fine edge, and I have an instinct that I had better keep quiet."

This depressed state of mind is not to be explained merely by worries about the war, or the prolonged suspense of work. In large part it was, I believe, due to a repugnance conceived against the subjects on which he had been working, in England and Florence—these being the only ones in a sufficient state of preparation to be available for the clamorous *Atlantic*. He had suffered anguish in Rome, and here was a nation of parents in such anguish of apprehension as he had felt for his daughter. It seemed dreadful to add any gloom, however imaginative, to the sad time, but whenever he took his pen, uprose his dark phantoms—Septimius Felton, Dolliver, Grimshawe, and the Bloody Footstep. "Ah," he said, "could I only write a sunshiny book!"

Then he set himself to "The Dolliver Romance," and no doubt, had he lived to complete it, he would have brought some Italian sunshine into it. But, alas, hardly had he begun when the sunshine began to fade out of his life. Una fell ill! This daughter, idealized as we have seen in Hilda—the pure vision of his own soul—had returned from the shadow of death, in Rome, to become interwoven with the very fibres of Hawthorne's life. Her relapse became his also. And it was an illness of ominous character, rendering it but too certain that her strength was undermined, and threatening both mind and body.

This was really Hawthorne's death-blow. He would not admit that anything was the matter with him, but he

aged daily. Una was sent to the seaside, and physically seemed somewhat better; but Hawthorne's prophetic vision foresaw a peril he would not whisper even to his wife. In Una's absence he could not eat or sleep, and sank visibly. He was persuaded to make a visit to the seaside himself, taking his son Julian, in the summer of 1863. This was near Salem, where he visited his friend Dr. Loring. He had given no sign that their little girl, of five years, had attracted him, but on leaving he took her hand and said, "I hope, Posy, when we meet again we shall be better acquainted." Something in his tone caused the simple words to be remembered, as if he had seen in the precocious child some token that their meeting might be in the happier world for which he hoped. She died the next summer. The seaside rambles with Julian did him some good, but not so much as he artfully made out to his wife, to whom he wrote mirthful letters (printed by his son) that now are most touching. Against her entreaties he returned home, with the evident determination to utilize every heart-beat of his consciously sinking life in an effort to leave his literary work in better shape. He must have toiled terribly on "Septimius Felton," which, as found among his manuscripts, was in such rapid and broken handwriting that his daughter Una could only decipher and arrange it by Robert Browning's aid. He would appear, however, to have left this for "The Dolliver Romance," of which one part was found finished, and two other scenes fairly well sketched. Both of these works are on the same theme—the elixir of life. It is sufficiently tragical to think of the author in his tower,

writing of an elixir by which the aged grew young, while he himself is consciously sinking into his grave.

Julian Hawthorne, in publishing another version of "Septimius Felton" (*Lippincott's Magazine*, January-April, 1890), points out the probable relation of its war features to the fact that the first Concord regiment marched to the late civil war on April 19, anniversary of the Concord fight in 1775. In seeing the British advance, Septimius says, "I know not what I have to do with the quarrel." Such was Hawthorne's own feeling eighty-seven years later; but he presently shared the national ardour, and thrust aside "Septimius" for "Pansie," or "The Dolliver Romance." He also longed to write "a sunshiny book." From the cold-hearted Septimius he turned to the genial antiquarian of Florence, Seymour Kirkup, and pretty Imogen at his side. These now appear as Grandsir Dolliver and Pansie.

It has been stated, in the earlier part of this work, that Emerson feared Hawthorne's sombre spirit; but I suspect that now the fear was on Hawthorne's side. He was writing the romance of immortality, while sinking into the grave, and perhaps dreaded Emerson's attitude towards all supernaturalism. I have heard, indeed, that when Emerson visited his friend in his illness, and spoke of man's resources of strength as lying in himself, altogether ignoring the future, Hawthorne was rather depressed than cheered by the interview.

Hawthorne at last grows very weary. "Those verses entitled 'Weariness' in the last magazine seem to me profoundly touching. I, too, am weary, and begin to look ahead for the Wayside Inn." So he writes to

Fields in December, 1863. At the end of the following February he writes to this dear friend, his publisher, that the pen has finally fallen from his hand, and that he shall never finish the romance. "I cannot finish it unless a great change comes over me ; and if I make too great an effort to do so, it will be my death ; not that I should care much for that, if I could fight the battle through and win it, thus ending a life of much smoulder and scanty fire in a blaze of glory. But I should smother myself in mud of my own making. . . . I am not low-spirited, nor fanciful, nor freakish, but look what seem to me realities in the face, and am ready to take whatever may come. If I could but go to England now, I think that the sea-voyage and the 'old home' might set me all right."

So sorrowfully, for Hawthorne's friends, had the New Year (1864) opened. One of the nearest of them, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, then had an interview with Hawthorne, at the end of which he advised his friend to take some quiet tour. Dr. Holmes had little hope of Hawthorne's recovery, and Hawthorne himself none at all. He had no fear of death. I was told that Hawthorne expressed to Dr. Holmes some anxiety lest his physical condition, or, if he should die, the cause of his death, might be described in the newspapers.

In March Hawthorne went southward, under care of his friend W. D. Ticknor, senior partner of the firm that published his works, and Mrs. Hawthorne received daily letters from Ticknor, reporting improvement in her husband's condition. But at Philadelphia Ticknor suddenly died. The shock—the burden of having

the body prepared for transportation — the whole ghastly situation—brought Hawthorne home a dying man. But his wife would not surrender. His old friend, Ex-President Pierce, came on in May to take him on an excursion. Politically the two had parted. Dr. Loring and Hawthorne, in the previous summer, drove over to see Pierce at Rockport. The three had been "democrats" together, but now, when the visitors spoke favourably of Lincoln, the ex-president said, "Not one act of his administration can be commended." Pierce had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Certainly he never forgot his friendship for Hawthorne. When, about the same time, Mrs. Pierce died, Hawthorne, ill as he was, could not be restrained from accompanying his friend to her grave. The air was chill, and Pierce, in that moment of deep grief, was observed to turn and pull up Hawthorne's overcoat about his throat.

About the middle of May Hawthorne parted with his family, sweetly, but without any scene, and the two white-haired old men started on their way towards the region where their college days were passed together. On May 18th they reached Plymouth, New Hampshire. They stopped at the Pemigewasset Hotel. Once or twice in the night Pierce crept near Hawthorne's bed, in an adjacent room, and found him asleep, and breathing quietly. But when he went again, some time after midnight, Hawthorne, though his position was unchanged, had ceased to breathe.

On May 24, 1864, Hawthorne was borne to his rest to Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, not far from his house, in



Concord. There, not far from his friend Thoreau—of whom he meant to prefix a sketch in his “Dolliver Romance,”—he was attended by Emerson, who now lies near him, and Longfellow, who wrote touching lines on his dead friend.

“ There in seclusion and remote from men,  
The wizard hand lies cold,  
Which at its topmost speed let fall the pen,  
And left the tale half told.

Ah, who shall lift that wand of magic power,  
And the lost clue regain !  
The unfinished window in Aladdin’s tower  
Unfinished must remain ! ”

On the coffin lay the manuscript of “the tale half told”—tale of the deathless man. The address in the church (Unitarian) was by the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, who in the same building had married Hawthorne and his wife twenty-two years before. A vast crowd assembled, and there was almost a crush, so great was the desire to look on the face of the great man whom even some of his neighbours had never seen.

With a letter written to dear friends by the widow—her song in the night—this brief history of a great writer may fitly end.

“ *May, 1864, Monday Night.*

“ BELOVED,—When I see that I deserved nothing, and that my Father gave me the richest destiny for so many years of time, to which eternity is to be added, I am struck dumb with an ecstasy of gratitude, and let go my mortal hold with an awful submission, and without a murmur. I stand hushed into an ineffable peace which I cannot measure nor understand. It therefore must be that

peace which 'passeth all understanding.' I feel that his joy is such as 'the heart of man cannot conceive,' and shall I not then rejoice, who loved him so far beyond myself? If I did not at once share his beatitude, should I be one with him now in essential essence? Ah, thanks be to God who gives me this proof—beyond all possible doubt—that we are not, and never can be, divided! If my faith bear this test, is it not 'beyond the utmost scope and vision of calamity'? Need I ever fear again any possible dispensation, if I can stand serene when that presence is reft from me which I believed I must instantly die to lose? Where, O God, is that supporting, inspiring, protecting, entrancing presence which surrounded me with safety and supreme content?

" 'It is with you, my child,' saith the Lord, 'and seemeth only to be gone.'

" Yes, my Father, I know I have not lost it, because I still live. 'I will be glad.' 'Thy will be done.' From a child I have truly believed that God was all-good and all-wise, and felt assured that no event could shake my belief. To-day I *know* it.

" This is the whole. No more can be asked of God. There can be no death nor loss for me for evermore. I stand so far within the veil that the light from God's countenance can never be hidden from me for one moment of the eternal day, now nor then. God gave me the rose of time—the blossom of the ages to call my own for twenty-five years of human life. God has satisfied wholly my insatiable heart with a perfect love that transcends my dreams. He has decreed this earthly life a mere court of 'the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

" Oh, yes, dear heavenly Father! 'I will be glad' that my darling has suddenly escaped from the rude jars and hurts of this outer court, and when I was not aware that an angel gently drew him within the palace-door that turned on noiseless golden hinges, drew him in, because he was weary.

" God gave to His beloved sleep. And then an awakening which will require no more restoring slumber.

" As the dewdrop holds the day, so my heart holds the presence of the glorified freed spirit. He was so beautiful here, that he will not need much change to become 'a shining one!' How easily I shall know him when my children have done with me, and

perhaps the angel will draw me gently also within the palace-door, if I do not faint, but truly live. 'Thy will be done.'

"At that festival of life that we all celebrated last Monday, did not those myriad little white lily-bells ring in for him the eternal year of peace, as they clustered and hung around the majestic temple in which he once lived with God? They rang out, too, that lordly incense that can come only from a lily, large or small. What lovely ivory sculpture round the edge! I saw it all, even at that breathless moment, when I knew that all that was visible was about to be shut out from me for my future mortal life. I saw all the beauty, and the tropical gorgeousness of odour that enriched the air from your peerless wreath steeped me in Paradise. We were the new Adam and new Eve again, and walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and there was not yet death, only the voice of the Lord. But indeed it seems to me that now again there is no death. His life has swallowed it up.

"Do not fear for me. 'Dark hours?' I think there is nothing dark for me henceforth. I have to do only with the present, and the present is light and rest. Has not the everlasting—

" 'Morning spread  
Over me her rich surprise!'

I have no more to ask, but that I may be able to comfort all who mourn, as I am comforted. If I could bear all sorrow I would be glad, because God has turned for me the silver lining; and for me the darkest cloud has broken into ten thousand singing-birds—as I saw in my dream that I told you. So in another dream, long ago, God showed me a gold thread passing through each mesh of a black pall that seemed to shut out the sun. I comprehend all now; before I did not doubt. Now God says in soft thunders, 'Even so.'—Your faithful friend,

"SOPHIA HAWTHORNE."



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